

Exegesis and Eschatology in Old English Poetry

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Abstract

In this thesis I contend that, although Anglo-Saxon poetry is not specifically allegorical, one is justified in speaking of a "cultural context" for the poetry, formed by and responding to the writings of the Fathers, which permits one to consider liturgical overtones, not as hints at allegory, but as contributing nonetheless to an understanding of the texts in question. Extrapolating this into the archetypal sphere, I contend that one may also speak of a "cross-cultural context," in which general images at any rate may be viewed as evoking responses not necessarily tied to the specific world of Anglo-Saxon culture, and that unconscious factors of composition must be taken into account. I then apply this combination of patristic and archetypal criticism to three main groups of images--those relating to the sea, those relating to the eschatology of the cross, and those relating to the theme of the homeland. The sea represents flux, chaos, and hostility to the divine but is also the catalyst--as with the Wanderer and the Seafarer--for personal development and "rebirth," analogous to Christian baptism. Whereas the sea indicates potential, vegetation is the actual, and the highest expression of this actuality is the cross, without which the waters of baptism are wholly inefficacious, just as the Christian may not reach heaven without being in the ship of the Church, which is fabricated of the wood of the cross. But even this only

constitutes earthly fulfillment, and the final stage is the eternal fixity of the Heavenly City, the ultimate homeland. Viewing Anglo-Saxon poetry in this light--as a poetic cosmology based on the elements of Christian myth--it is possible to enhance our understanding of the poetry, while avoiding the excesses of the historical school, who believe that it is strictly conscious and allegorical, as opposed to symbolic.

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Abbreviations

AC	Antike und Christentum.
AM	Annuale Mediaevale.
ARW	Archiv für Religionswissenschaft.
ASE	Anglo-Saxon England.
Beiträge	Beiträge zur Geschichte der deutschen Sprache und Literatur.
CWJ	The Collected Works of C.G. Jung.
EETS	Early English Text Society.
ELH	English Literary History.
ELN	English Language Notes.
Estudien	Englische Studien.
Estudies	English Studies.
HTR	Harvard Theological Review.
JAC	Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum.
JEGP	Journal of English and Germanic Philology.
JTS	Journal of Theological Studies.
MÆ	Medium Ævum.
MLN	Modern Language Notes.
MLQ	Modern Language Quarterly.
MLR	Modern Language Review.
MP	Modern Philology.
MS	Mediaeval Studies.
NLH	New Literary History.
NM	Neuphilologische Mitteilungen.
NQ	Notes and Queries.
PMLA	Publications of the Modern Language Associa- tion of America.

PG	Migne, <u>Patrologia Graeca</u> .
PL	Migne, <u>Patrologia Latina</u> .
PQ	Philological Quarterly.
RAC	Rivista di Archeologia Cristiana.
RES	Review of English Studies.
SN	Studia Neophilologica.
SP	Studies in Philology.
TZ	Theologische Zeitschrift.
ZKT	Zeitschrift für katholische Theologie.
ZNTW	Zeitschrift für neutestamentliche Wissen- schaft.
ZTK	Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche.

Chapter One

Introductory Remarks

on the Interpretation of Anglo-Saxon Poetry

In recent years, the shift from a Germanic approach to Old English poetry to a Christian patristic one has been almost complete, and there are now few seekers for the evidences of Germanic antiquity among the field of Anglo-Saxon scholars. The old excesses, however, have given way to new ones, and a realization of the heavy influence of a Christian environment on Old English poetry, which was starting to become apparent as early as Klaeber's classic study of the Christian elements in Beowulf,¹ has to some extent replaced the old search for the remains of Germanic paganism by a rabid hunting for Christian symbols. It is clear that the work of the historical critics has been of great value to the development of the study of Old English poetry, and the work of Robertson and Huppé has been just as significant in one way as that of various earlier scholars was in another, but the time has come for a redefinition of the critical method to be applied to the study of Anglo-Saxon poetry. The purpose of this introductory chapter will be to present various of the approaches currently available--especially that of historical criticism--and to attempt to set forth on the one hand the many elements wherein their value consists

¹ Fr. Klaeber, "Die christlichen Elemente im Beowulf," Anglia, 35 (1912), 111-36, 249-70, 453-82; 36 (1912), 169-99.

and to examine, on the other, the various problems they entail and the objections which have been raised to their application. Finally we will propose a slightly revised approach grounded in the methodologies of disciplines outside the realm of strict literary criticism.

The basic assumption of the Robertsonian school is that for the medieval poet all life and literature is symbolic and that this is reflected in the poetry he produces. The Bible is the main source of such literary symbolism, or as Northrop Frye puts it more generally, the Bible is "the main source for undisplaced myth in our tradition."² This being the case, it is assumed that the central themes of Biblical writing must necessarily be reflected in medieval poetry and that the mode of Biblical interpretation can be applied with equal validity to works of literary art. The main sourcebook for the methodology of scriptural hermeneutics is St. Augustine's De doctrina christiana, and it is this to which the main adherents of the historical school continually refer. According to Augustine, scripture teaches nothing but charity and condemns nothing but cupidity, where charity is the love of God and cupidity is its opposite--in other words, the love of any created thing for its own sake.³ Augustine says further that the method for interpreting

² Northrop Frye, Anatomy of Criticism: Four Essays (1957; rpt. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1971), p. 140; cf. p. 135 and D.W. Robertson, Jr., "Historical Criticism," English Institute Essays, 1950, ed. Alan S. Downer (New York: Columbia University Press, 1951), p. 9.

³ De doctrina christiana, iii, 10, 14-16 (PL, 34, 71-2).

scripture is

ut quidquid in sermone divino neque ad
morum honestatem, neque ad fidei veritatem
proprie referri potest, figuratum esse
cognoscas,⁴

where "correct behavior" and the "truth of the faith" are
equivalent to the proper working out of charity. Further,
he states that whoever finds a lesson in scripture con-
tributing to charity, even though the author may not have
intended it in that place, is not deceived.⁵ On the ex-
pository, rather than the interpretative, side,

Huic...qui sapienter debet dicere, etiam
quod non potest eloquenter, verba Scrip-
turarum tenere maxime necessarium est.⁶

Whoever would speak wisely must above all remember the
words of scripture.

Starting from these Augustinian premises--that on
the one hand one must search the Bible for the doctrine
of charity and that on the other, the shortest way to
wise speech is to imitate the words of scripture and
therefore, implicitly, the unitary message they contain--
the critics of the historical school contend that "medi-
eval Christian poetry...is always allegorical when the
message of charity or some corollary of it is not evident
on the surface."⁷ Robertson goes on to say that the sur-
face inconsistencies in medieval Christian poems have in-
deed been purposely implanted in order to exercise the

⁴ Ibid., iii, 10, 14 (PL, 34, 71).

⁵ Ibid., i, 36, 40 (PL, 34, 34).

⁶ Ibid., iv, 5, 8 (PL, 34, 92).

⁷ Robertson, "Historical Criticism," p. 14.

reader and so as not to cast pearls before swine.⁸ That the Anglo-Saxon audience would be capable of interpreting such inconsistencies and comprehending the underlying message is a given. B.F. Huppé, while contending that the primary purpose of Anglo-Saxon poetry was to elevate the mind to a perception of general truth,⁹ notes that the exegetical work of the Fathers, through which the charity-centred meaning of Biblical symbolism was extended and developed,

did not remain the esoteric possession of the learned but was disseminated everywhere in Christendom through sermons,

and similarly, that

Christian poets, whether they wrote in Latin or English, expected their audiences to possess, in varying degrees, a common tradition of doctrine and symbol. They seem also to have expected their audiences to make a considerable effort to understand the underlying meaning of a poem.¹⁰

So also does Margaret Goldsmith accept the influence of Christian doctrine on the symbolic structure of Old English, as being a product of the entire ethos of the period, and the ability of the listener to understand is once again assumed, since

the whole aim of the education at that time was to teach men to look into the Scriptures and in the created world for the invisibilia Dei and to reject as delusive the temporal satisfactions of this life, in the hope of eternal reward.¹¹

⁸ Ibid., p. 15.

⁹ Bernard F. Huppé, Doctrine and Poetry: Augustine's Influence on Old English Poetry (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1959), p. 94.

¹⁰ Ibid., pp. 84, 93-4.

¹¹ Margaret Goldsmith, The Mode and Meaning of Beowulf (London: Athlone Press, 1970), p. 59.

A related method to that of the historical school is the typological approach to literary criticism.¹² Typology grew out of the Christian interpretation of the Old Testament, and the persons and events of Jewish history were seen as the shadows or figures of things to come. These types could be fulfilled either in Christ or in the sacraments of the Church or in the events of the last days, and all three were held to be related. Thus, in Hellenistic Christianity, typology became the expression both of the unity of God's plan and of its successive stages, and there developed a strong relationship between typology and soteriology.¹³ The foundations of this method of exegesis are laid in the New Testament itself, for Jesus says,

Scrutamini Scripturas, quia vos putatis in
ipsis vitam aeternam habere: et illae sunt
quae testimonium perhibent de me (Jn. 5:39),

and says of Moses, "de me enim ille scripsit" (v. 46). This theme is carried on by Paul, who states that Moses and the Jewish priests served only according to the shadow of heavenly things and that the Law is a shadow of good things to come (Heb. 8:5-6, 10:1), and throughout

¹² On exegetical typology generally, see Jean Daniélou, From Shadows to Reality: Studies in the Biblical Typology of the Fathers (London: Burns and Oates, 1960), G.W.H. Lampe and K.J. Woollcombe, Essays on Typology, Studies in Biblical Theology 22 (London: SCM Press, 1957), and Raymond Carter Sutherland, "Theological Notes on the Origin of Types, 'Shadows of Things to Be'," Studies in the Literary Imagination, 8 (1975), 1-13. On typology as it relates to literature, see Erich Auerbach, "Figura," in Scenes from the Drama of European Literature: Six Essays (New York: Meridian, 1959), 11-76.

¹³ Jean Daniélou, A History of Early Christian Doctrine before the Council of Nicaea, II: Gospel Message and Hellenistic Culture (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1973), p. 159.

the Epistles, he gives typological interpretations of the figures of Old Testament history. This dichotomy between Old Law and New, between shadow and fulfillment, is summed up by St. Augustine when he says that the things promised in the New Testament are eternal, whereas those promised in the Old Testament are only temporal,¹⁴ or as St. Ambrose puts it,

potior est enim lux quam umbra, veritas
quam figura, corpus auctoris quam manna
de coelo.¹⁵

This tradition of typological exegesis, mainly as expanded and developed in the writings of St. Augustine, was quite strong in Anglo-Saxon England, and Alvin A. Lee contends that in order to understand Old English poetry one must first understand Biblical typology.¹⁶ Geoffrey Shepherd, in speaking of the widespread typological tradition of the time, makes it clear that the Old English poet could "take for granted that the poems will be understood typologically and some of their types are neither standard nor simple."¹⁷ The use of typology in literature presupposes an analogy between God as Creator of the world and the poet as creator of an artistic cosmology,¹⁸ and

¹⁴ De civitate Dei, xviii, 35 (PL, 41, 595).

¹⁵ De mysteriis, viii, 49 (PL, 16, 422).

¹⁶ Alvin A. Lee, "Old English Poetry, Mediaeval Exegesis and Modern Criticism," Studies in the Literary Imagination, 8 (1975), p. 61.

¹⁷ Geoffrey Shepherd, "Scriptural Poetry," in Continuations and Beginnings: Studies in Old English Literature, ed. Eric Gerald Stanley (London: Nelson, 1966), p. 23.

¹⁸ Sutherland, p. 13.

the elements of both world and poem should be held to reflect God's truth, although in the latter case, only as perceived by and filtered through the mind of man.

Often spoken of is the difference between typology and allegory, and whereas the former is historical and diachronic, concerned with events in the context of a larger temporal framework, the latter is extra-historical and synchronic. Typology is generally held to be a legitimate extension of the literal sense of scripture, but allegory is not¹⁹ and permits the interpreter to inject what meaning he will into the passage at hand. Lampe says of the allegorical approach that "it is a method which cuts away the roots of sound exegesis,"²⁰ but this alone is no reason to reject allegory as a possible strategy to have been used by the medieval poet, since it is not a question here of what is "true," but rather of what the poet believed to be true, and the gradual fusion of the allegorical and typological schools over time left the medieval Churchmen, especially during the Anglo-Saxon period, just as likely to have employed a superimposed allegorical interpretation as to have used a typological interpretation which grew organically out of the literal sense of the text. In addition, it is hardly clear that one is obligated to view Christian truth diachronically rather than synchronically in

¹⁹ Daniélou, From Shadows to Reality, p. 64; cf. pp. 111-12.

²⁰ Lampe and Woollcombe, p. 33.

every case, especially since it is by definition static and unchanging over time.²¹ Finally, it must be remembered that whereas Lampe and others consider only the interpretation of the Bible, we here are considering poetry, so what may or may not be a legitimate method for reading scripture may have a completely different value with regard to poetry. It is quite possible that allegorical content may consciously have been infused into a medieval poem, where such meaning may not necessarily have been intended in the Old Testament narrative from which it was taken.

Despite the clear influence of the Latin Fathers on the Anglo-Saxon Churchmen, there are still objections which can be raised to the use of patristic exegesis in the criticism of vernacular literature. One of the strongest of these is the fact that it is quite unclear as to whether the principles of Biblical exegesis were ever meant to apply to works outside the canon of holy writ.²² Although scriptural obscurity was held to be beneficial, so as to exercise the mind of the reader in the search for truth and so as to avoid casting pearls before swine, Augustine goes on to say that one should not copy the obscurity of Biblical eloquence, but that

²¹ For a discussion of synchronic as opposed to diachronic approaches, see below, pp. 49-52.

²² See, for instance, E. Talbot Donaldson, "Patristic Exegesis in the Criticism of Medieval Literature: The Opposition," in Critical Approaches to Medieval Literature: Selected Papers from the English Institute, 1958-1959, ed. Dorothy Bethurum (New York: Columbia University Press, 1960), p. 4, and Philip Rollinson, "Some Kinds of Meaning in Old English Poetry," AM, 11 (1970), 5-21.

in omnibus sermonibus suis primitus ac maxime ut intelligentur elaborent, ea quantum possunt perspicuitate dicendi, ut aut multum tardus sit qui non intelligat, aut in rerum quas explicare atque ostendere volumus difficultate ac subtilitate, non in nostra locutione sit causa quominus tardiusve quod dicimus possit intelligi.²³

and Morton Bloomfield sees the patristic method of interpretation as being "essentially erroneous."²⁴ Margaret Goldsmith contends that in the transition from pagan to Christian, poetry necessarily became allegorical, and she cites the allegorization of Vergil as the classic example of this shift.²⁵ But Greenfield points out that although Vergil was treated as a Christian allegory, that was certainly not how he had intended it.²⁶ Goldsmith goes on to say that there was no separation between creative and interpretative allegory,²⁷ but this is a rather dubious principle, and many of the excesses of the modern school of historical criticism may be traced to this very failure to distinguish between the creative and interpretative functions. According to Goldsmith's view, apparently, one would indeed be justified in interpreting

²³ De doctrina, iv, 8, 22 (PL, 34, 99).

²⁴ Morton W. Bloomfield, "Symbolism in Medieval Literature," MP, 56 (1958), p. 74.

²⁵ Goldsmith, Mode and Meaning, p. 64; see also James H. Wilson, Christian Theology and Old English Poetry (The Hague: Mouton, 1974), pp. 28-9, on allegorization--the extracting of Christian meaning from Germanic cultural materials--as a means of making the converted heathens believe.

²⁶ Stanley B. Greenfield, The Interpretation of Old English Poems (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1972), p. 137.

²⁷ Goldsmith, Mode and Meaning, p. 70.

the Aeneid as a Christian allegory, but the fact that one can allegorize a work of literary art does not therefore prove that it is an allegory.

Charles Donahue, in his article on the role of patristic exegesis in the criticism of medieval literature, traces the lapses of the pan-allegorical school to two basic assumptions: first, that patristic exegesis cares little for the littera, and second, that all medieval poems must be approached as allegories.²⁸ E.F. Huppé clearly adheres to the first of these principles when he says,

Augustine's figure of the shell and the kernel reveals most clearly his conception of the relations between the literal level and the level of meaning, sententia. The kernel is what is important; it is to get at this that we crack the shell. The shell has no other value.²⁹

But as Norman Hinton points out, it was "heresy to overlook or slight the littera in exegesis,"³⁰ and Augustine states that one must believe both the historical and allegorical senses of scripture.³¹ One problem with modern allegorical interpretations, then, is that they often ignore the obvious descriptive sense of the text in favor of a special "hidden" meaning which may or may

²⁸ Charles Donahue, "Patristic Exegesis in the Criticism of Medieval Literature: Summation," in Bethurum, Critical Approaches, pp. 61-2.

²⁹ Huppé, Doctrine and Poetry, p. 13; he cites De doctrina, iii, 11, 7.

³⁰ Norman Hinton, "Anagogue and Archetype: The Phenomenology of Medieval Literature," AM, 7 (1966), p. 61.

³¹ De civitate Dei, xv, 27, 1 (PL, 41, 473).

not in fact exist. The objection is frequently made that when the medieval poet intends allegorical meaning, he usually comes out and tells us it's there, so that it is therefore an unjustifiable practice to look for "meaning" which is not directly tied to the literal sense of the text. With regard to what is usually known as "personification allegory," this last point is a telling one, although it does not mean that it is therefore impossible to perceive symbolic word-associations which broaden the meaning of the work being considered, without one's believing that work to be, or to have been intended as, an allegory. In other words, for instance, one might be justified in seeing liturgical overtones in the story of Beowulf's swimming match with Breca, although it is certainly wrong-headed to interpret the episode as an allegory of Christian baptism. We shall have a chance to consider this trade-off between symbol and allegory once again in a later context.³²

Donahue's first objection, then--that the pan-allegorical school often ignore the littera in order to look for the sententia--is directly tied to the second--that they necessarily believe, therefore, that all medieval poems should be approached as allegories. This unitary approach, however, goes against the very Augustinian principles the historical critics claim to follow. Augustine, referring to the interpretation of the Bible, says that one should diligently consider every passage

³² See below, pp. 24-7.

until one discovers an interpretation contributing to the reign of charity, but then he goes on to say that if this lesson appears literally in the text, the passage is not figurative.³³ This surely opens up the possibility, apparently not admitted by the Robertsonians, of there similarly being poetic passages which do not need to be rendered allegorically, but of which the meaning is plainly to be seen on the surface. One can foresee the objection being raised that such a straightforward poem could not therefore be a "good" poem, since any literature worth reading must have multiple levels of meaning, but if the Bible was the sourcebook for all literature and the highest expression of poetic eloquence, yet at the same time had portions which contained only literal meaning, it would seem like an artificial standard for medieval poetry to assume that everything in it must have multiple levels of meaning.

Looking for one unitary theme, the pan-allegorists also open themselves up to the charge of treating every poem as the same. This criticism is just insofar as the pan-allegorists claim to find one conscious, predetermined meaning in every poem and persist in ignoring the obvious literal sense of a text in order to discover it, although it must not, on the other hand, be ignored that all Old English poetry was written in a single,

³³ De doctrina, iii, 15, 23 (PL, 34, 74); cf. De civitate Dei, xvi, 2, 3 (PL, 41, 479): "Non sane omnia quae gesta narrantur, aliquid etiam significare putanda sunt: sed propter illa quae aliquid significant, etiam ea quae nihil significant attexuntur."

homogeneous, cultural environment and that there are obvious correspondences between discrete poems, produced by their common grounding in Christian mythology. The failure of the historical critics, then, is partly one of simply making their case too strongly. However much the writings of the Fathers may have influenced the symbolic structure of Old English poetry, it is somewhat different to find a consistent and universal allegory of charity in these poems without allowing for the differences between them. Another aspect of this excessiveness is that, however useful the patristic criticism of literature may be, it is not, as the pan-allegorists seem to claim, the only possible method of interpretation. This is what Stanley B. Greenfield means when he refers to the Robertsonian exegetes as having fallen into the "solipsistic pit."³⁴ Applying the principles of patristic exegesis to a consideration of Old English poetry is an attempt to discover some sort of "meaning" therein, but it ignores wider aesthetic problems, and it is not clear that the primary or sole function of Anglo-Saxon literature is a small-minded didacticism. In a later context we will contend that it is permissible to consider meaning in poetry apart from aesthetic experience, and if this is valid, a patristic approach, referring to the cultural context in which the poetry was written, is certainly of value. When, however, this is held to be the only possible way of reading poetry, and when the perception of

³⁴ Greenfield, Interpretation, p. 140.

meaning turns into the making of value-judgements, the method has overstepped the bounds of its viability. Far too many critical studies refer to Old English poetry as "non-representational" and seem to claim that, because various poems can be shown to "mean" something, they are therefore good poems. Neil D. Isaacs expresses this fallacy in its highest form when he says,

If a work of art is allowed to limit itself in terms of what it sets out to do, then it creates within itself its own criteria for judgment. If a poem designed as a mnemonic device for the number of days in each month performs that function with universal success, it must be called an excellent poem...A flawed epic may be considered better than a nearly perfect but trivial epigram. But such comparative evaluations are substantially extraneous to the work of art--and to the formalist critic, who must determine what the artifact has to do and how well it does it.³⁵

The point is, that if a mnemonic poem fulfills its purpose as a mnemonic device, it is merely a good mnemonic, but not necessarily on that account a good poem. E. Talbot Donaldson sums up the case against making such aesthetic value-judgements when he says that if there are allegorical poems promoting charity, and if they are good, it is not because they are allegories and charity-promoting.³⁶ Even the very notion of Robertsonian charity is somewhat suspect, and in one sense, it is simply too broad a category to be of any use, since all Christianity may be reduced in the end to the opposition of the love

³⁵ Neil D. Isaacs, Structural Principles in Old English Poetry (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1968), p. ix.

³⁶ Donaldson, "Patristic Exegesis," p. 2.

of God and the love of temporal things, or in other words, to charity and cupidity. Thus, any Christian poem may justly be held to promote the one and condemn the other, and this is particularly apparent in Old English poetry, the eschatological thrust of which is clear.

Another excess of the historical school is the belief, not only that medieval poems are allegorical, but that they can be analyzed according to the fourfold method of Biblical exegesis. Morton Bloomfield strongly criticizes this notion and says that

even in the period of its greatest use the symbolic method with its three- or fourfold levels was never mechanically or completely applied to Scripture,³⁷

continuing with the asseveration that, although all meaning is multiple, a purely mechanical systematization is pointless. The Phoenix is the clearest allegory in Old English, but J.E. Cross's analysis of the poem as following the fourfold scriptural exegetical method is not convincing, and even less so is Faith H. Patten's similar treatment of The Dream of the Rood, a poem which, though highly symbolic, is hardly allegorical.³⁸ The cross, for instance, can well represent the individual sinner, Christ's victory over sin, the Church, or es-

³⁷ Bloomfield, "Symbolism in Medieval Literature," p. 76.

³⁸ J.E. Cross, "The Conception of the Old English Phoenix," in Old English Poetry: Fifteen Essays, ed. Robert P. Creed (Providence: Brown University Press, 1967), 129-52, and Faith H. Patten, "Structure and Meaning in The Dream of the Rood," ESudies, 49 (1968), 385-401. Greenfield, Interpretation, pp. 140-45, points out many of the weaknesses in Cross's analysis of The Phoenix.

chatological glory, but here tropology, allegory, and anagoge are only implied as they are implied by any aspect of Christian truth and are not a function of the inherent structure of the poem. Margaret Goldsmith states the case aright when she says,

one would not expect an allegorical work composed in Bede's time or thereabouts either to identify itself by formal signs or to preserve consistent levels of meaning. Allegory to these scholars was not a literary form, but, in the convenient phrase adopted by Angus Fletcher, 'a symbolic mode' of thinking and writing.³⁹

Philip Rollinson brings the further charge that Robertson fails to recognize commonplace medieval distinctions between narrative modes and claims that different types of literary works call for different sorts of treatment.⁴⁰ He distinguishes both history and heroic poetry as being poetic fictions which can serve as models of behavior but which can not be analyzed in the same way as the Bible, since they are directly limited by what their first signification means. He then goes on to say that Old English Biblical poems would also fall into this category, and this strikes one as being a somewhat dubious assumption.⁴¹ The Old English Exodus, for example,

³⁹ Goldsmith, Mode and Meaning, p. 70; she cites Angus Fletcher, Allegory: The Theory of a Symbolic Mode (New York: 1964), pp. 2-3.

⁴⁰ Rollinson, "Some Kinds of Meaning," p. 8n.; for what follows, see pp. 14-19.

⁴¹ For the view that Old English Biblical poems were held to be inspired, see Shepherd, "Scriptural Poetry," pp. 8-9, but see also Donahue, "Patristic Exegesis," pp. 78-9, who says, "it would seem...that there can be no spiritual or mystical level of meaning in the work of any uninspired author."

since it is a poetic fiction, must only serve as an exemplary lesson, and

in spite of the liturgical overtones, which could hardly be avoided, the essential meaning intended is surely not to emphasize the relationship of the poetic fiction to the rite of baptism.⁴²

Although it is clear that the Old English Exodus is not "about" the rite of baptism, the "liturgical overtones" which Rollinson so glibly dismisses are surely more important than he would have us believe, and they indicate the intellectual framework in which one must consider the poem. The Exodus is not an allegory, but it does contain deeper levels of symbolic meaning aiming at Christian truth.⁴³ Rollinson similarly considers Beowulf's descent of Grendel's mere and says that because Beowulf is a poetic fiction, "he [Beowulf] and his exploits should be exemplary" and that

the function of the liturgical overtones, which suggest some sort of parallel between Beowulf and Christ, should be judged in terms of this legitimate (medieval) generic expectation. It is unlikely that an Old English audience would have put aside the expected exemplary/imitative lesson of heroic deeds in favor of an allegory in which Beowulf is not significant as Beowulf but as some sort of figure (he cannot be a type) representing Christ.⁴⁴

Stanley B. Greenfield is right when he says that "generic expectations have a limited applicability in the

⁴² Rollinson, "Some Kinds of Meaning," p. 18.

⁴³ For a fuller discussion of the Exodus, see below, pp. 115, 155-66.

⁴⁴ Rollinson, "Some Kinds of Meaning," p. 19.

interpretation of Old English poems,"⁴⁵ and Rollinson's stance is simply generic reductionism in its worst form.

It is perhaps useful here to examine a specific application of historical criticism, in order to see exactly where the fault of the method lies. Robertson, in his long discussion of garden symbolism in medieval literature,⁴⁶ tells us, quite rightly, that in a medieval context any tree may potentially imply either the Tree of Knowledge in the Garden of Eden or the Tree of Life in the Heavenly City and that the Tree of Life may variously represent sapientia, the Cross, Christ, or the good Christian, for all of which he cites the relevant patristic sources. He makes the distinction between good trees and gardens, which represent the good Christian and the Church, presided over by Christ, and evil trees and gardens, which represent unredeemed man and the community of the sinful, presided over by Satan, and whereas the first is governed by charity, the second is governed by cupidity. He then applies this to Beowulf's descent of Grendel's mere--the mere having obvious associations with the evil garden and with hell, "which is simply the evil garden taken anagogically"⁴⁷--interprets the fleeing hart, referring to Ps. 42, as the faithful Christian who pre-

⁴⁵ Greenfield, Interpretation, p. 159.

⁴⁶ D.W. Robertson, Jr., "The Doctrine of Charity in Mediaeval Literary Gardens: A Topical Approach through Symbolism and Allegory," Speculum, 26 (1951), 24-49; for what follows, see especially pp. 25-35.

⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 32.

fers death to the damnation which results from hiding under the wrong trees, as was the case with Adam and Eve, who hid "in medio ligni paradisi" (Gen. 3:8), and finally sees Beowulf as a Christ-figure who "shows himself capable of purifying a society of men from the forces of cupidity."⁴⁸ There is much of value in this interpretation, but the mistake is in assuming that Beowulf is meant as an explicit allegory. It is useful to see the association between Grendel and Satan, the mere and hell, Beowulf and Christ, but this is not the same as to believe that there must therefore be a one-to-one correspondence between the elements of the littera and Christian doctrine. It is hardly astounding to assume that a poet could use the elements of Christian symbolism without necessarily creating therefrom a multi-levelled allegory. The final blow follows when Robertson says,

The fact that neither Christ nor the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil is mentioned in the poem is in keeping with the principles of Augustinian literary interpretation. An intellectual effort is necessary to discern Divine truth in the arrangement of materials in the poem, and it is from the fruitful pursuit of this effort, not from the decoration on the outer shell, that the poem's aesthetic value arises.⁴⁹

This is simply an open-ended justification for finding any meaning one desires in a work of literary art, without the necessity of any evidence whatsoever coming from the text in question. The difference here is that between

⁴⁸ Ibid., p. 34.

⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 34.

symbol and allegory.⁵⁰ We can see that Grendel resembles the Christian Satan and that this reinforces his role as the personification of evil, but this is not the same as to say that Grendel is Satan, which cannot be assumed without at least some hint from the text. Another error which is apparent here is the equation of "meaning" with "aesthetic value"--an equation to which the experience of literature can hardly be reduced--and much of the aesthetic value of the poem surely lies in the "outer shell," which he is so anxious to discard. In the conclusion to this particular article, Robertson goes on to say that "there is no evidence of pagan ideals or superstitions in the picture of Grendel's mere,"⁵¹ but this is simply too single-minded. Even if we accept a fundamentally Christian conception and design for the poem, Robertson's exclusionary position nonetheless ignores the fact that "pagan ideals and superstitions" still formed part of the environment in which the Anglo-Saxon poet was operating, even if they were no longer consciously believed, and it is conceivable, for instance, that the pagan associations of "wyrmcynnes fela," "nicras," and "wyrmas ond wildeor"⁵²

⁵⁰ See below, pp. 24-7.

⁵¹ Robertson, "The Doctrine of Charity," p. 46.

⁵² Beowulf, ll. 1425-30. These and all other quotations from Beowulf are taken from Fr. Klaeber, ed., Beowulf and the Fight at Finnsburg, 3rd ed. (Lexington, Massachusetts: D.C. Heath, 1950). All other quotations from Old English poetry are taken from Elliott van Kirk Dobbie and George Philip Krapp, eds., The Anglo-Saxon Poetic Records, 6 vols. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1931-53). All future references will be cited in the text by poem and line number.

would be just as unfavorable as the Christian, without necessarily making them an allegory for the souls of the damned. Similarly, a hart's reluctance to rush into such a place as the wood surrounding Grendel's mere can be understood without any necessary reference to the pious Christian avoiding damnation, and it^{is} natural even for men to choose the known danger rather than the unknown. Once again, understanding these associations can aid our understanding of the poem, but there is no need on that account to conclude that Beowulf is a complex, multi-levelled allegory.

Whatever the excesses, as demonstrated here, of the historical school, modern scholars nonetheless owe a great debt to Robertson and his followers. Not only have they demonstrated, as Rollinson points out,⁵³ that patristic exegesis can be useful in explaining various puzzling literal elements in poetic texts, whether or not we believe with Robertson that surface inconsistencies have been added on purpose so as to exercise the mind of the reader in the search for Christian truth, but more importantly have they demonstrated that there is indeed a coherent cultural context behind the corpus of Old English poetry. Alvin Lee is right in saying that the larger context of Old English poetry is that of Biblical or Christian mythology⁵⁴ and in referring to the poetry as

⁵³ Philip B. Rollinson, "The Influence of Christian Doctrine and Exegesis on Old English Poetry: An Estimate of the Current State of Scholarship," ASE, 2 (1973), p. 272.

⁵⁴ Alvin A. Lee, The Guest-Hall of Eden: Four Essays

possessing "an imaginative unity...that is at once heroic, Germanic, didactic, and Christian." Margaret Goldsmith expresses the same thought in a different way when she says that "the Anglo-Saxon poet does not speak as an individual, but as the spokesman of his social community."⁵⁵ Thus, those who criticize the patristic method of literary analysis as tending to focus on specific images apart from the "context" in which they appear, fail to realize that to a large extent the context is the thought-environment, the Ideenkreis, in which they were written. Noting the similarities between poetic texts is not the same as believing them all to be identical, and we would stop far short of claiming that all Old English poems have one unitary message such as charity. The interpretation of any particular text must not only refer to the thought of the time, but must also be consistent with the rest of the poem,⁵⁶ especially if there is to be any question of conscious allegorization.

It is an important step forward to be able to speak of a "context" beyond just that of the poem itself, and it allows us to expand the horizons of meaning reached by a previous and more formalistic school of criticism.

on the Design of Old English Poetry (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1972), pp. 5-6. The quotation that follows appears on p. 6.

⁵⁵ Goldsmith, Mode and Meaning, p. 6. On the notion of "context," see her contribution to "Allegorical, Typological or Neither? Three Short Papers on the Allegorical Approach to Beowulf and a Discussion," ASE, 2 (1973), p. 288.

⁵⁶ Cf. Goldsmith, Mode and Meaning, p. 4.

Given, however, the well-known syncretism of Christian myth, one can actually accuse the historical critics of not having gone far enough in this direction, since one can just as fairly place Anglo-Saxon poetry within an even wider cross-cultural context. Although there can certainly be no question of genetic dependence, early Christianity adopted many elements from the mystery religions--"they borrowed...not the substance but the dress wherein to display it"⁵⁷--and many further elements entered Christianity through the cultural heritage they held in common with the Greeks, so that many Christian symbols can be traced to the everyday elements of Hellenistic life.⁵⁸ Just as the Anglo-Saxon Christians appealed to their Germanic brethren by adopting images and forms from their mutual environment, so did the men of the primitive Church appeal to the Gentiles in their own imagery, adopting pagan symbols for the expression of Christian concepts both in theological debate and in the literary and plastic arts,⁵⁹ and much of this symbolism stuck and was carried on, certainly as far down as Anglo-Saxon times. Geoffrey Shepherd speaks of "the baffling eclecticism of Anglo-Saxon intellectual life,"⁶⁰ which

⁵⁷ Hugo Rahner, "The Christian Mystery and the Pagan Mysteries," in Pagan and Christian Mysteries: Papers from the Eranos Yearbooks, ed. Joseph Campbell (New York: Harper, 1963), p. 152.

⁵⁸ Ibid., pp. 172-3.

⁵⁹ See, for instance, Elias J. Bickerman, "Symbolism in the Dura Synagogue: A Review Article," HTR, 58 (1965), pp. 145-7.

⁶⁰ Shepherd, "Scriptural Poetry," p. 26.

not only contained elements from the Latin West, but also from sources much further afield. Speaking on a much broader level, Mircea Eliade claims that "what we call syncretism can be seen at every point in the course of religious life."⁶¹ It thus seems just to look to other literatures, and especially to classical literature and culture, for comparisons useful in the analysis of Old English poetry, since they share many of the same basic assumptions and have many common symbols. This is not with an eye to finding "sources" or any direct literary influence but is only concerned with distinguishing the elements of a common mode of thinking.

This brings us to a crucial point and to one of the major failings of the historical school of criticism--the failure to distinguish between allegory and symbol, between conscious and unconscious modes of composition. Margaret Goldsmith, for instance, takes allegory loosely as meaning "saying one thing in order to mean something beyond that one thing"⁶² and then goes on to say that in Bede's time

there was no theoretical separation of symbol and allegory; an allegorical work was simply one in which there was a great deal of hidden or obscure meaning conveyed in parable, enigma, proverb or al-

⁶¹ Mircea Eliade, Patterns in Comparative Religion (1958; rpt. New York: New American Library, 1974), p. 462.

⁶² Goldsmith, Mode and Meaning, p. 64n. This is directly from the Fathers, and she cites, pp. 69-70, Augustine, De Trinitate, xv, 9, 15 (PL, 42, 1068) and Bede, PL, 90, 1846. See also Jerome, PL, 24, 629; PL, 25, 161; PL, 26, 389; Augustine, PL, 37, 1347; and Rabanus Maurus, PL, 112, 330.

most any kind of metaphorical or ironic statement. When allegory is conceived in this way, the distinction between allegorical interpretation (of Scripture or of pagan writers) and allegorical creation (in new compositions) dissolves away.⁶³

The vagueness of her terminology here is confusing. She seems to imply that one can ignore the difference between creation and interpretation because the symbolic content of a given work of art is unconscious and both creation and interpretation are merely expressions of an all-encompassing "thought-world" to which the entire matter may be reduced, but the remainder of her book belies this notion. For her, clearly, the "thought-world" is a conscious one, and her method of analysis proceeds after the pattern: x means y in scripture/commentary, therefore x means y in poetry. To be sure, there is a large degree of conscious input in poetry, and there are many secondary meanings and significations which do refer to the patristic commentaries, but there is a further, unconscious element as well, and Goldsmith's amalgamation of the interpretative and creative functions is still rather suspect. Although it may be true that there was no separation of symbol and allegory in Bede's day, there is such a separation today, and it is we today who are the interpreters of Old English poetry. One weakness of Goldsmith's historical approach is that

we cannot entirely escape from our present or individual perspectives into the historical realities of other voices, other places, however much we may wish to do so,⁶⁴

⁶³ Goldsmith, Mode and Meaning, p. 70.

⁶⁴ Greenfield, Interpretation, p. 6.

and it is from a modern perspective that we must ultimately view Old English poetry, although this is no excuse for ignoring the intellectual environment of the time.

In straightening out this terminological jumble, it is useful to refer to Jung's distinction between symbol and allegory. Most simply stated,

An allegory is a paraphrase of a conscious content, whereas a symbol is the best possible expression for an unconscious content whose nature can only be guessed, because it is still unknown.⁶⁵

Allegory, therefore, gives us a one-to-one correspondence between conscious and understood facts, but

a symbol is not an arbitrary or intentional sign standing for a known and conceivable fact, but an admittedly anthropomorphic--hence limited and only partly valid--expression for something suprahuman and only partly conceivable.⁶⁶

or as Doering happily puts it, "symbols are metaphors for the eternal in the forms of the transient."⁶⁷ The applications of this distinction to Old English poetry are clear. Morton Bloomfield has already pointed out that

⁶⁵ C.G. Jung, The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious, 2nd ed., vol. 9, part 1 of CWJ (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1968), p. 6n.

⁶⁶ C.G. Jung, Psychology and Religion: West and East, vol. 11 of CWJ (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1958), p. 207. See also Symbols of Transformation: An Analysis of the Prelude to a Case of Schizophrenia, 2nd ed., vol. 5 of CWJ (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1967), pp. 77, 124, in the latter of which places he says, "A symbol is an indefinite expression with many meanings, pointing to something not easily defined and therefore not fully known," and Psychological Types, vol. 6 of CWJ (1971; rpt. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976), pp. 473-81.

⁶⁷ Oskar Doering, Christliche Symbole (Freiburg: 1933), p. 1; cited in Hinton, "Anagogue and Archetype," p. 69.

there is a difference between conscious and unconscious allegories⁶⁸--using the term "allegories" here in the more general, non-Jungian sense--and Alvin Lee once again raises the question as to just how much of poetic content is determined by the author.⁶⁹ Old English cannot, in any case, be analyzed solely with reference to conscious, existential forms of meaning. "Medieval literature seems posited on a system which includes the non-apprehendable as a specific item in its aesthetic system,"⁷⁰ and it is important not to forget the role of the unconscious, of the "non-apprehendable," in a poetic mythology such as that of Anglo-Saxon England. It is apparent that we can, and indeed must, speak of a larger cross-cultural Christian/mythological context for Old English poetry, and that this is not solely dependent on conscious and articulated sources and influences. As Eliade contends, "a religious symbol conveys its message even if it is no longer consciously understood in every part,"⁷¹ and it is just this sort of "message" which is being transmitted in Old English poetry as one element in a larger "meaning" which

⁶⁸ Morton W. Bloomfield, "Allegory as Interpretation," NLH, 3 (1972), p. 309.

⁶⁹ Lee, "Old English Poetry, Mediaeval Exegesis and Modern Criticism," pp. 66-7.

⁷⁰ Hinton, "Anagogue and Archetype," p. 70.

⁷¹ Mircea Eliade, The Sacred and the Profane: The Nature of Religion (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1959), p. 129. See also Patterns, p. 450: "a symbolism does not depend upon being understood; it remains consistent in spite of every corruption and preserves its structure even when it has been long forgotten," and Rites and Symbols of Initiation: The Mysteries of Birth and Rebirth (New York: Harper and Row, 1958), p. 128.

refers to both conscious and unconscious data. Consequently, it is useful for us to consider various "non-literary" approaches to poetry, in order to see how far the methodologies of such disciplines as Jungian psychology, structural anthropology, or comparative religion can be applied to the study of Old English. This does not mean to imply that we intend to controvert or ignore more standard critical methodologies but only that we wish to examine how far these traditional approaches may be extended with an eye to furthering our understanding of the symbolic structures of Old English poetry. Again, this is not to imply that we wholly subscribe to any of these external theories, nor even that we are qualified in every respect to judge their validity--they are presented here primarily for their heuristic value, and it should be understood that our main concern is still with the poetry itself. Indeed, given the at least partial failure of the patristic school of criticism, however much they may be tending in the right direction, the purpose of this thesis as a whole will be to examine the validity of combining such literary and non-literary approaches, with reference to specific groups of images in Old English poetry.

Jung postulates that there is an identity of fundamental human conflicts, independent of time and place, and he refers this notion to that which he calls the "collective unconscious," "a psychic substrate of a suprapersonal nature" which is identical in all men.⁷²

⁷² Jung, Archetypes, p. 4. See also Symbols of Trans-

The contents of this collective unconscious are the "archetypes"--

forms or images of a collective nature which occur practically all over the earth as constituents of myths and at the same time as autochthonous, individual products of unconscious origin.⁷³

These archetypes are not determined as regards content, but only as regards form, and he refers to them elsewhere as "a functional disposition to produce the same, or very similar, ideas."⁷⁴ One manner in which these archetypes manifest themselves is as mythical motifs, and Jung speaks of myth and mystery as the "involuntary revelation of a psychic, but unconscious, pre-condition."⁷⁵ Mythical motifs, then, express the universal thoughts of mankind and belong to the very structure of the collective unconscious. The archetypes and mythic motifs are characteristically numinous⁷⁶ and "non-apprehendable," and

formation, p. 4. H.M. Chadwick, The Study of Anglo-Saxon, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: W. Heffer and Sons, 1955), p. 42, notes the same phenomenon when he says, "The study of comparative literature shows that, in general, the intellectual activities of peoples tend to follow similar lines."

⁷³ Jung, Psychology and Religion, p. 50.

⁷⁴ Jung, Symbols of Transformation, p. 102. See also Archetypes, p. 66, where he says, "It is not a question of inherited ideas but of inherited possibilities of ideas," and p. 79, where he refers to the archetype as "a possibility of representation which is given a priori."

⁷⁵ C.G. Jung and C. Kerényi, Essays on a Science of Mythology: The Myth of the Divine Child and the Mysteries of Eleusis, Bollingen Series XXII (1949; rpt. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973), p. 162.

⁷⁶ Jung, Symbols of Transformation, p. 158; Archetypes, p. 268.

this they have in common with the religious symbols such as form the aesthetic environment of Anglo-Saxon poetry. Hugo Rahner, who approaches the problem from a specifically Christian point of view, similarly notes that

in order to express a higher, transcendent idea, religious man must always make use of the primal symbols provided by nature. The common factor is therefore to be found in the human need for symbolism,⁷⁷

and the universality of religious symbols, however one explains their presence, is hardly a matter of debate. On a slightly different level, Jung notes the archetypal content of metaphors,⁷⁸ and this also has a direct effect on the interpretation of literature, where metaphoric structures, wholly apart from conscious content, can have a "meaning" for the reader which extends beyond that of the surface narrative. Such general metaphors as the sea and darkness and caves, for instance, invoke the chthonic, whereas vegetation and light and open space invoke the divine and the creative, wholly apart from the poetic context in which they appear. Maud Bodkin has long since approached this problem with regard to literature, and the above opposition conforms to her notion of the "Heaven-Hell Archetype."⁷⁹

⁷⁷ Rahner, "The Christian Mystery," p. 172; earlier in the same article (p. 155), Rahner expresses his approbation of Jung's work on the nature of religious symbols.

⁷⁸ Jung and Kerényi, p. 76.

⁷⁹ Maud Bodkin, Archetypal Patterns in Poetry: Psychological Studies in Imagination (1934; rpt. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1971), pp. 90-152.

This leads naturally enough to a discussion of Northrop Frye's formulation of the methods and aims of "archetypal criticism." If we may ignore for the moment his belief that the collective unconscious is "an unnecessary hypothesis in literary criticism,"⁸⁰ Frye demonstrates, as does Jung, the cross-cultural occurrence of symbolic structures. For him, one must consider poems in relation to other poems, and the natural manner in which to do this is to analyze the symbols they have in common. Whereas for Jung the orientation is individual and psychological, for Frye it is social--

The archetypal critic studies the poem as part of poetry, and poetry as part of the total human imitation of nature that we call civilization.⁸¹

This is much the same as Margaret Goldsmith's contention that the Anglo-Saxon poet was the spokesman for a social community, only on a much broader scale. Seeking the archetypal patterns which link poems together, Frye warns that one must not take them as being more central than the work itself may warrant.

In pointing out the latent demonic or apocalyptic patterns in a literary work, we should not make the error of assuming that this latent content is the real content hypocritically disguised by a lying censor. It is simply one factor which is relevant to a full critical analysis.⁸²

So in Old English, one must not believe, on one level, that the swimming match with Breca is meant as an expli-

⁸⁰ Frye, Anatomy, p. 112.

⁸¹ Ibid., p. 105.

⁸² Ibid., p. 158.

cit allegory of baptism, nor on another, that the only way one can view it is as an archetype of initiation indicating the coming to age of the hero. Its "meaning" is its literal meaning, but the initiatory signification is nonetheless present, and one can note the structural role that this passage plays in the poem as a whole.⁸³ Given the nature of Christian mythology, the latent content is, to some extent at least, the real content. The archetypal symbols unconsciously activated in the composition of poetry are in many ways closer to the inner processes of the mind than are the superimposed schematic correspondences of conscious allegory. Translating this conscious/unconscious dichotomy into Christian terms, one would say that it is not the external events of this life which are "real" and significant, but the divine forms which they imitate and the eschatological truth whither they look. Medieval poetry is founded, once again, on a system which not only includes the "non-apprehendable," but in which this is actually the only source of meaning. Thus, although Beowulf's exploits must be read literally, they may not be reduced merely to being factors of objective existential reality.

On the archetypal plane, the work of literary art is myth,⁸⁴ and it is to a great extent as myth that one must consider Anglo-Saxon poetry. Francis Lee Utley discusses this approach to medieval literature generally

⁸³ For a full discussion of this episode, see below, pp. 89-98.

⁸⁴ Frye, Anatomy, p. 118.

and says that Beowulf, for example, is a mythic document, as it deals with the universal problem of evil.⁸⁵ For Eliade, myth in primitive society provides a paradigmatic model, according to which all significant human acts are to be performed,⁸⁶ since for archaic man, as for the medieval Christian, neither external objects nor human deeds have any autonomous intrinsic value. The value of human endeavors is solely determined by the extent to which they reproduce primordial models. What myth describes is the incursions of the sacred into the world, and this is what gives the world "reality," since for man in primitive society, the sacred is the preeminently "real," just as for the Christian, God is the only source of truth and being. Eliade refers to the components of myth--to the discrete paradigms wherein myth consists--as "archetypes," although he is careful to say that these are not the same as those postulated by Jung and that he does not intend to encroach upon the sphere of depth-psychology.⁸⁷ The difference between Jung and Eliade here is in some measure only one of emphasis and approach, however, and what Eliade sees as a phenomenon in the social world, Jung sees as a phenomenon in the psychological. Both Eliadean and Jungian archetypes have, as it

⁸⁵ Francis Lee Utley, "Folklore, Myth, and Ritual," in Bethurum, Critical Approaches, p. 86.

⁸⁶ See, for instance, Eliade, Patterns, p. 410.

⁸⁷ Mircea Eliade, The Myth of the Eternal Return or Cosmos and History, Bollingen Series XLVI (1954; rpt. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1974), pp. xiv-xv.

were, an ontological function, and whereas in primitive society the paradigms which Eliade discerns are an expression of the sacred, and therefore of the "real," so do Jung's archetypes, in their transcendence of personal consciousness, provide the individual with a basis for self-definition. Norman Hinton compares Jung's archetypes with the eschaton of Christianity, as both are the objects of individual striving,⁸⁸ and this is similar to Eliade's statement that the reproduction of paradigmatic acts indicates the desire and attempt to live close to one's gods.⁸⁹ Eliade himself refers to the Platonic structure of archaic ontology and points out the resemblance between the world of Jung's archetypes and that of Platonic Ideas.⁹⁰ Similarly, both Jungian and Eliadean archetypes have a deontological function as well. Both determine how one should act and are analogous to the moral imperatives provided by Christianity. For Jung, denial or avoidance of the archetype can only have unfortunate psychological consequences, just as in primitive society, departure from the paradigmatic model is held to constitute sin.⁹¹ This deviation into the realm of the personal is analogous in Christian terms to loving something other than God--in other words to cupidity.

⁸⁸ Hinton, "Anagogue and Archetype," pp. 67-70.

⁸⁹ Eliade, The Sacred and the Profane, p. 91.

⁹⁰ Mircea Eliade, Myth and Reality (1963; rpt. New York: Harper and Row, 1975), p. 125n.; Cosmos and History, p. 35.

⁹¹ See, for example, Eliade, Cosmos and History, pp. 75, 85-6.

Symbols here are important as they participate in a hierophany, and symbolism, which is closely tied to nature itself, effects a permanent balance between man and the sacred, between microcosm and macrocosm.⁹² Although myths and symbols cannot ultimately be reduced to a mere reflection of the forces of nature, there is a natural basis for much symbolism, or as Northrop Frye puts it, "an archetypal symbol is usually a natural object with a human meaning."⁹³ In psychoanalytic terms, the events of nature are symbols of the inner psyche, and the psyche becomes equivalent to the world at large, as the universality of unconscious forms becomes, in archaic, "myth-producing" times, all-embracing.⁹⁴ We have already mentioned the early Church's adoption of the symbols of the pagan world, and it was because of their universality that they were able to convey the newly imposed Christian meanings. Thus Christ, for instance, became the sol invictus, and the natural cycle of day and night became analogous to the notion of Christian resurrection. The universality of such symbols accounts for their cross-cultural viability, and according to Eliade, not only does a symbolism reveal many senses at once, but "all the meanings in a symbol are present together, even when it may look as though only some of them are effective."⁹⁵

⁹² See Eliade, Patterns, p. 447.

⁹³ Frye, Anatomy, p. 113.

⁹⁴ See Jung, Archetypes, p. 6; Jung and Kerényi, p. 42.

⁹⁵ Eliade, Patterns, p. 169.

The example he gives is that of the moon,⁹⁶ in each symbolic use of which, all the other symbols are implied, and

if you want to express the multiplicity of lunar hierophanies in a single formula, you may say that they reveal life repeating itself rhythmically. All the values of the moon, whether cosmological, magic or religious, are explained by its modality of being: by the fact that it is "living", and inexhaustible in its own regeneration.⁹⁷

In other words, all the meanings of a given symbol refer to one underlying meaning, of which they are only the external expression. This is not dissimilar to Jung's position with regard to the archetypes, of which he says,

It is legitimate to bring...seemingly remote associations into hypothetical relationship, because they all spring from a common root, i.e., the collective unconscious.⁹⁸

and he elsewhere notes the interpenetration of qualities and contents as being characteristic of symbols and points out their habit of constantly changing shape and thereby eluding precise definition.⁹⁹ This cross-cultural interpenetration of symbol meanings can hardly be denied, and one can therefore consider Old English poetry as being, at least in some degree, but one expression of a nearly universal mythology, tied, not to history, but to the transhistorical nature of the human

⁹⁶ Ibid., pp. 154-85; for what follows, see especially pp. 156-9.

⁹⁷ Ibid., pp. 157-8.

⁹⁸ Jung, Archetypes, p. 311.

⁹⁹ Jung, Psychology and Religion, p. 73; Jung and Kerényi, p. 98.

mind. Clearly, this is not the only manner in which one can view the poetry, but it can certainly be used as one element in an overall approach, and it is not by accident that we have chosen very general patterns of images--those relating to the sea, those relating to vegetation and the cross, and those relating to the theme of the homeland--to consider in the present essay. This is not to say that we intend to discuss these themes solely in their archetypal aspect, and we will naturally narrow the focus of our examination by the use primarily of Biblical and patristic sources, as being the expressions of this general, transhistorical pattern most directly related to the creation of Anglo-Saxon poetry. But it is important to understand the broader underpinnings of such expressions of mythological truth, where "truth" does not refer to metaphysical absolutes, but as Jung would say, to "habitual modes of thinking, feeling, and behaving which experience has proved appropriate and useful."¹⁰⁰

A further useful parameter for our study of Old English poetry as myth is provided by Lévi-Strauss and the school of structural anthropologists, between whom and the Jungians and comparative religionists there are many points of contact. For Lévi-Strauss, the vocabulary of a myth matters less than its structure--in other words, less than the relations between the various contents of the narrative--and these mythic structures are

¹⁰⁰ C.G. Jung, Aion: Researches into the Phenomenology of the Self, 2nd ed., vol. 9, part 2 of CWJ (1968; rpt. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978), p. 27.

the same for all men and are few in number, however much individual symbols may differ.¹⁰¹ This is similar to Eliade's view that all the diverse expressions of a given symbol may justly be brought together because all relate to one underlying and universal meaning, and what Eliade sees in the moon as the possession of "vitality," Lévi-Strauss would see as the polar opposition of life and death. For Lévi-Strauss also, "any myth represents a quest for the remembrance of things past,"¹⁰² just as for Eliade, all symbolic and mythical thought looks to the primordial past in order to establish the reality of the temporal by reference to the atemporal. For Lévi-Strauss, in fact, a myth's operational value derives from the fact that the particular pattern described is timeless.¹⁰³ Since the structure of a myth remains constant, and does not change in relation to a change in narrative contents, the existence of different versions of a myth does not affect its meaning, and indeed, a myth consists of all its variants.¹⁰⁴ This can be applied to Old English poetry, if we consider the corpus of that poetry as simply constituting one version of Christian myth, and can be used in answering the question as to how far patristic interpretations of the Bible can be applied to Old English Biblical poems. Considered mythically, both patristic

¹⁰¹ Claude Lévi-Strauss, Structural Anthropology (New York: Basic Books, 1963), pp. 203-04.

¹⁰² Ibid., p. 204.

¹⁰³ Ibid., p. 209.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., pp. 216-17.

commentaries and Old English poems are versions of Christian myth, and therefore they have much in common, and the reading of the one can only increase our understanding of the other, especially as the poets of the Anglo-Saxon period had actually read the writings of the Fathers and lived in a world where their teachings were widely disseminated through sermons and homilies. Thus, when Stanley B. Greenfield warns that one must not ignore the differences between Old English and its patristic or scriptural "sources,"¹⁰⁵ he is right only insofar as he refers to Old English poetry as a non-mythological product of conscious creative input, in which context, such changes serve as the signposts indicating poetic purpose. When the poet of the Old English Exodus, for example, rearranges the order of the Biblical narrative, we can look to the changes he makes--such as the interpolation of the stories of Noah and Abraham--as indicating a particular sort of emphasis, but he is dealing nonetheless with basic Christian mythemes, and one would therefore be unjustified in ignoring the symbolic significance of the Crossing of the Red Sea, the sailing in Noah's ark, or the sacrifice of Isaac.¹⁰⁶ For Lévi-Strauss, as for Jung and Eliade, the authors of myths are often unconscious of their meanings, and it is almost possible to see the Old English poet as some sort of Christian bricoleur.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁵ Greenfield, Interpretation, pp. 18-19.

¹⁰⁶ For a fuller discussion of the Exodus, see below, pp. 115, 155-66.

¹⁰⁷ On bricolage as the mode of savage thought, see

Lévi-Strauss breaks myth down into a number of polar oppositions, which are mediated within the myth, and for him, "meaning" is constituted by the sum of mediations on all levels. In "The Story of Asdiwal," for instance,¹⁰⁸ the narrative moves between heaven and earth, east and west, motion and fixity, and water and land--to name a few of the oppositions involved--and the "meaning" is the way in which all of these oppositions, whether on the geographical, social, economic, or cosmological levels, are resolved in the narrative. The applications of this dialectical approach to the study of Christian myth should be self-evident, and the oppositions of God and Satan, heaven and hell, land and sea, cosmos and chaos are resolved in the Incarnation and its associated symbols.

For Lévi-Strauss, as for Jung and Eliade, myth has a sociological function. For him, "the purpose of myth is to provide a logical model capable of overcoming a contradiction,"¹⁰⁹ and the myth itself is an admission of the insurmountable contradiction inherent in given social facts. Insofar as myth and poetry are both social phenomena, this conforms to the notion of the Anglo-Saxon poet

Claude Lévi-Strauss, The Savage Mind (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1966), pp. 16-36. This is only heuristically speaking, and we do not mean to push the analogy for more than it is worth.

¹⁰⁸ Claude Lévi-Strauss, "The Story of Asdiwal," in The Structural Study of Myth and Totemism, A.S.A. Monographs 5, ed. Edmund Leach (1967; rpt. London: Tavistock, 1973), 1-47.

¹⁰⁹ Lévi-Strauss, Structural Anthropology, p. 227; see also "The Story of Asdiwal," p. 30.

as the spokesman of a social community and to that of the archetypal critic as studying poetry generally as part of civilization, but Lévi-Strauss goes rather further than this and sees myth as a purely social phenomenon. He believes, for instance, that all the oppositions in the Asdiwal myth can be assimilated to the problems of matrilineal cross-cousin marriage.¹¹⁰ This does not strike one as being readily applicable to a non-primitive society such as that of Anglo-Saxon England, and it is hardly convincing in any case. One must here understand the value of the method being proposed without being ready to reduce all myth and poetry to a system of objective social facts. Anglo-Saxon poetry does have a social and deontological function, but the contradictions to be overcome--such as that between life and death or between the notion of a Divine Providence and the fact of a fallen world--are not tied to particular social institutions. The Dream of the Rood may refer, as John V. Fleming has convincingly argued,¹¹¹ to the practice of Anglo-Saxon monasticism, but this practice is hardly significant in itself, but only as it bears reference to eternal and eschatological truth. The only problem that remains with applying Lévi-Strauss's method of myth interpretation to the study of poetry is his own disclaimer as to the validity of such a practice. Whereas the value of myth, he contends, is preserved even through

¹¹⁰ Lévi-Strauss, "The Story of Asdiwal," p. 30.

¹¹¹ John V. Fleming, "'The Dream of the Rood' and Anglo-Saxon Monasticism," Traditio, 22 (1966), 43-72.

the worst translation, poetry cannot be translated without serious distortions.¹¹² This is correct insofar as a poem is an aesthetic document which does something more than merely "mean," but for our purposes, taking poetry as a subset of mythology and considering only its "meaning," which we admit straightway is only one aspect of the poetic experience, this difference becomes somewhat less important.¹¹³ Mary Douglas questions why, indeed, Lévi-Strauss is so anxious to detach myth criticism from literary criticism and points to his successful structural analysis, done in conjunction with Roman Jakobson, of Baudelaire's "Les Chats."¹¹⁴ Part of the reason Douglas sees for this differentiation is that,

When dealing with poetry, Lévi-Strauss gives full value to the rich ambiguity of words. When dealing with myth, he suggests that their meaning is clear cut, lending itself to being chopped into objectively recognizable, precisely defined units.¹¹⁵

This is one weakness in Lévi-Strauss's criticism of myth, although in actual practice, he does seem to give more

¹¹² Lévi-Strauss, Structural Anthropology, p. 210.

¹¹³ Lee, for one, objects, "Old English Poetry, Medieval Exegesis and Modern Criticism," p. 52, that a critic must not stop at understanding "meanings," and of course he is right, although he is reacting mainly (pp. 54, 62) against those who believe that the medieval poet's main intention is to convey a meaning--a position which we do not hold. Only insofar as the critic purports to tell the whole story about poetry is it unjust to consider meaning alone.

¹¹⁴ Mary Douglas, "The Meaning of Myth: With Special Reference to 'La Geste d'Asdiwal'," in Leach, Structural Study, p. 62; Roman Jakobson and Claude Lévi-Strauss, "'Les Chats' de Charles Baudelaire," L'Homme, 2 (1962), 5-21.

¹¹⁵ Douglas, "The Meaning of Myth," p. 63.

significance to narrative content than he makes out in theory.¹¹⁶

Despite the useful elements which can be drawn from Jungian, comparative religionist, and Lévi-Straussian methodologies, there are numerous objections which may be raised. One basic criticism is voiced by D.W. Robertson, who objects to regarding "older literature in the light of modern aesthetic systems, economic philosophies, or psychological theories," since "such systems, whatever their value may be, do not exist before they are formulated."¹¹⁷ However matters may stand with modern aesthetic systems and economic philosophies, it is simply not correct to believe that the principles of modern psychology do not apply to medieval times for the sole reason that they had not then been discovered. This is tantamount to a denial of the existence of "mind" itself. This criticism would be valid if it were a question here of conscious conformance to Jungian--or Freudian or anyone else's--principles, but it is rather a question of unconscious adherence to universal and unchanging psychological laws, which are no less true when undiscovered than are the laws of Newtonian or relativistic mechanics.

A much more cogent criticism is made by Northrop Frye, who objects to any such "determinist" method as

substituting a critical attitude for
criticism...proposing, not to find a con-

¹¹⁶ Cf. G.S. Kirk, Myth: Its Meaning and Functions in Ancient and Other Cultures (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970), p. 46 et passim.

¹¹⁷ Robertson, "Historical Criticism," p. 4.

ceptual framework for criticism within literature, but to attach criticism to one of a miscellany of frameworks outside it. The axioms and postulates of criticism, however, have to grow out of the art it deals with.¹¹⁸

But this is not to deny, as Frye's own second and third essays demonstrate beyond doubt, that there are cross-cultural correspondences between symbolic structures, and this is our main concern. We do not mean to use such theories as the stepping-stones to broad statements regarding the nature of the human mind or of society, but only as parameters to our definition of some types of meaning in Anglo-Saxon poetry. For this reason, once again, we have purposely selected very general themes for consideration, where the application of such theories is least likely to have an altering effect on the specific works of literary art involved. Similarly, if the sea or vegetation always have certain types of associations in literature, it hardly seems unduly Procrustean to believe that these associations may have some importance in Anglo-Saxon poetry as well.

One may always object, in the first instance, to Jung's notion of a collective unconscious, and G.S. Kirk, for example, rejects this idea on the basis of the supposition that Jung's proof of such a thing is completely inadequate.¹¹⁹ Kirk goes on to invoke Piaget and says that

His [Piaget's] opinion that Jung's general

¹¹⁸ Frye, Anatomy, p. 6.

¹¹⁹ Kirk, Myth, pp. 274-5.

symbols could in theory be the result of common processes of symbolic assimilation in childhood, and in practice are, is going to take a great deal of refuting.¹²⁰

But certainly Piaget's proof is no more adequate than Jung's, and Kirk is forced to admit with regard to Jung,

Nothing in his arguments makes it probable that ideas or symbols actually are inherited; but it is important to concede that no particular reason is so far known why they should not be.¹²¹

In any case, if the result is fundamentally the same, it is not of crucial importance which theory we accept, and the cross-cultural occurrence of myth motifs must still be accounted for. Northrop Frye remarks, with some justice, that the theory of a collective unconscious is "an unnecessary hypothesis in literary criticism,"¹²² and the important point is simply that the audience can respond to associations in art which it does not consciously understand. If one does not wish to proceed beyond this well-established fact, one is probably justified in judiciously applying Ockham's razor, although the Jungian hypothesis does explain and make understandable the universality of symbol meanings and does supply a theoretical basis from which to operate.

A more important objection, which can not only be levelled against Jung, but against the school of historical critics as well, is the vagueness which is often the product of multiple symbol meanings. Bickerman

¹²⁰ Ibid., p. 276.

¹²¹ Ibid., p. 277.

¹²² Frye, Anatomy, p. 112.

points out, for instance, that the psychoanalytic approach to symbols can make them mean anything,¹²³ and Morton Bloomfield makes essentially the same charge against the patristic criticism of literature when he says,

There is no way, seeing the wide variety of symbolic interpretations of the same thing, to correct any particular interpretation. At the most, one might say that a certain interpretation is not right, but of many alternate explanations there is no way of deciding which one is correct, for supporting texts from the wide variety of medieval and patristic theology can be found for each one.¹²⁴

Bloomfield sums this up in another place by saying simply, "It is not satisfying to feel that anything can mean anything."¹²⁵ In Jung's terms, since the archetypes are unconscious, all interpretations must necessarily be tentative, and the best that can be said of myth is that "all it does is to circumscribe and give an approximate description of an unconscious core of meaning."¹²⁶ Similarly, it is impossible to deduce any specific appearance of a given archetype from a knowledge of that archetype generally.¹²⁷ This is precisely Lévi-Strauss's

¹²³ Bickerman, "Symbolism in the Dura Synagogue," p. 134.

¹²⁴ Bloomfield, "Symbolism in Medieval Literature," p. 80.

¹²⁵ Bloomfield, "Allegory as Interpretation," p. 311.

¹²⁶ Jung and Kerényi, p. 75; cf. Jung, Symbols of Transformation, p. 222. Here we are in a realm where there is no fixed meaning of things and where the sole reality is the libido, just as for Lévi-Strauss, the sole reality is the human mind.

¹²⁷ Jung, Archetypes, p. 80.

position, as Nur Yalman describes it.

Since myths are 'collective representations' no particular 'mind' can be said to be responsible for them. In other words, the categories which may be discovered in the myths do not in fact correspond to those of any individual 'mind'.¹²⁸

Although we can make general statements about "myth" or the human mind, the individual expressions of these are open to wide variations. Yet it is hardly valid to dismiss them as being of no use only because they appear to be in a realm where "anything can mean anything." This seeming vagueness no more justifies one in dismissing the possibility of a meaningful application of archetypal symbols, than does Heisenberg's uncertainty principle--which states, heuristically speaking, that although one can set forth the properties of an atomic system as a whole, it is not possible to measure with accuracy the speed and path of any given particle within that system--warrant one in rejecting the laws of modern physics. The point is, however, that symbols do mean more than one thing and that no unitary signification can be attached to any particular one. When moving in the realm of literary criticism, this is hardly more than to say that there is such a thing as polysemous meaning, and in interpreting a literary work, one would refer to the symbol meanings which are consistent with the text wherein they appear, just as in the treatment of psychosis, the psychoanalyst would only look to those which

¹²⁸ Nur Yalman, "'The Raw:the Cooked::Nature:Culture': Observations on Le Cru et le cuit," in Leach, Structural Study, p. 83.

would be consistent with the problems of the individual patient. In the case of Anglo-Saxon England, this means that we will give the greatest weight to Biblical and patristic sources, as they apply to any given poem, so as not to refer to the, as it were, universal context, without consideration of the specific cultural milieu in which our poems were created. In Christian terms, the indefinability of the archetypes is analogous to the intangibility of the Christian mysteries, or as Norman Hinton phrases the comparison,

The flux of the littera is balanced by the stasis of the anagogia: the flux of the daily variations of the psyche is balanced by the stasis of the archetypes.¹²⁹

In a corpus of poetry based on the "non-apprehendable," whether this be expressed in terms of Christian dogma or psychological truth, it is hardly surprising that one should be faced with such a multiplicity of interpretative possibilities, which far from weakening the works in question, give them a greater range and depth of meaning.

A corollary to this problem of interpretative "uncertainty" is the charge often brought against Lévi-Strauss and others of handling every myth as being identical. Burrige, for instance, accuses Lévi-Strauss of treating all myths as dealing with the same things in the same way,¹³⁰ but Leach in some measure answers this objection when he says,

¹²⁹ Hinton, "Anagogue and Archetype," p. 72.

¹³⁰ K.O.L. Burrige, "Lévi-Strauss and Myth," in Leach, Structural Study, p. 113 et passim.

It is a misrepresentation to suggest that Lévi-Strauss is saying that 'all myths are the same'. He is arguing rather that, at a certain level of abstraction, the dialectical redundant structure of all myths is the same,¹³¹

and he draws the analogy with music and language--there are universals true of all musical compositions and of all languages, but one can still say many different things, both in music and in speech. Douglas objects, in a similar vein, that structural analysis can only reveal myths as timeless and synchronic,¹³² and this brings us to an important point, since the archetypal symbols in Anglo-Saxon poetry are also outside of time, and this is what permits us to consider them in a cross-cultural context. Lévi-Strauss's position, bolstered by the linguistic work of Roman Jakobson, is that "the opposition between synchronic and diachronic is to a large extent illusory"¹³³ and that myths are simultaneously both historical and ahistorical. This can be explained by reference to Eliade, who contends that history cannot basically modify the structure of an archaic symbolism and that "the fact that a hierophany is always a historical event...does not lessen its universal quality."¹³⁴

¹³¹ Edmund Leach, Introduction to Structural Study, p. xvii; see also pp. x-xi.

¹³² Douglas, "The Meaning of Myth," p. 67.

¹³³ Lévi-Strauss, Structural Anthropology, p. 89; see also pp. 210-12 and Roman Jakobson, "Prinzipien der historischen Phonologie," Travaux du Cercle Linguistique de Prague, 4 (1931), cited by Lévi-Strauss.

¹³⁴ Eliade, Patterns, p. 3; cf. The Sacred and the Profane, p. 137.

We have already spoken of the archaic impulse to recreate primordial time in an attempt to transcend profane history and to establish the models for all actions in the present and have shown that this attempt is embodied in myth. The "sacred time" in which these archetypal acts were performed becomes an eternal present for the performer, but viewed from the outside--from, say, a modern perspective--he is still caught in the flux of historical process. We are able to view his experience diachronically, but for him there is only the synchronic, and the only "reality" is embodied in the unchanging sacred and primordial models. Reattainment of primordial stasis becomes the goal, and thus linear time, progressing toward that goal, is embodied within the cyclical. In Christian terms, this is reflected in the notion that Paradise neither represents a return to a Golden Age nor is it something in the future, but that it is present and upon all those who believe,¹³⁵ which is a perspective at once diachronic and synchronic. This is analogous to the distinction Woolfcombe draws between consummative and reiterative recapitulation,¹³⁶ where the former partakes of the linear and the latter of the cyclical, or to Bultmann's more general split between fulfillment of prophecy and typology.¹³⁷ But as all Christian doctrine is eter-

¹³⁵ Daniélou, From Shadows to Reality, p. 16.

¹³⁶ Lampe and Woolfcombe, pp. 42-3.

¹³⁷ Rudolf Bultmann, "Ursprung und Sinn der Typologie als hermeneutischer Methode," in Pro Regno, Pro Sanctuario (G. van der Leeuw Festschrift), ed. W.J. Koojman and J.M. van Veen (Nijkerk: Callenbach, 1950), pp. 89-90.

nally "true," without regard to history, these last two distinctions are simply irrelevant to the interpretation of a body of Christian poetry such as that of Anglo-Saxon England. Christ can justly be related to Moses from whichever perspective--whether cyclical or linear--one chooses to adopt, and his nature partakes of both.

Northrop Frye speaks of archetypal criticism as resting on two organizing patterns, the one cyclical, in which ritual acts are repeated, and the other dialectic, in which they seek an absolute "eschatological" fulfillment.¹³⁸ He demonstrates the movement from the first of these worlds to the second, and what he calls the "point of epiphany" is

the symbolic presentation of the point at which the undisplaced apocalyptic world and the cyclical world of nature come into alignment.¹³⁹

Thus the dichotomy between synchronic and diachronic is of less importance than one might perhaps expect. So in the typological interpretation of poetry, as Robert B. Burlin notes, fluidity of the temporal perspective is characteristic,¹⁴⁰ and the practical difference between consummative and reiterative recapitulation, for us at least, is slight. Myths are always, in one sense then, timeless and synchronic, and this particular objection to the method at hand falls to the ground. Morton Bloomfield

¹³⁸ Frye, Anatomy, pp. 106, 161.

¹³⁹ Ibid., p. 203.

¹⁴⁰ Robert B. Burlin, The Old English Advent: A Typological Commentary, Yale Studies in English 168 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968), p. 77.

is surely correct when he says that

the general, the cyclic, and the mythical are no more meaningful than the particular, the unique, and the fact...The mere cycles of nature, for instance, are as meaningless as any unique fact unless one is satisfied by a purely biological vision of the world.¹⁴¹

But what we are interested in demonstrating is only that the cyclical and the synchronic do have a place in the criticism of literature and that there are universal factors which do not change, not that the cyclical is in itself equivalent to "meaning."

That there is such a thing as polysemous meaning in literature is a well-established and indisputable fact, and however much one may object to the method we have outlined here, this will remain so. On the most basic level, multiple meaning is dialectic in structure, and the Christian cosmos, for instance, is composed of God and Satan, heaven and hell, good and evil, stasis and flux. As Jung puts it in psychological terms, "everything that works is grounded in its opposite," and "the balanced co-operation of moral opposites is a natural truth,"¹⁴² which is the same as to say that there can be no good without evil. This split is reflected in the very structure of the psyche, where the conscious and the unconscious portions contain diametric opposites, so that the man, for instance, who is very meek in his conscious

¹⁴¹ Bloomfield, "Symbolism in Medieval Literature," p. 73n.

¹⁴² Jung, Archetypes, pp. 32, 36. See also Aion, pp. 47-8, 267.

life is very aggressive in his unconscious.¹⁴³ Another expression of this is the ambivalence of the sacred,¹⁴⁴ which can be at once both beneficial and harmful, just as the sun, which causes crops to grow and the earth to flourish, can have the opposite effect and turn the earth into a wasteland, if taken in too great a quantity. Similarly, the possession of a sacred place can confer meaning on the inhabitants, but is harmful or fatal if entered by the uninitiated. Also important is the contrast between the divinely sanctioned order and the fallen and chaotic world, and this results in many of the dramatic opposites embodied in myth. Kerényi speaks of mythologems as containing "the revelation of divinity in the paradoxical union of lowest and highest, weakest and strongest,"¹⁴⁵ and in Christian terms this would be expressed in the notion of Christ as mortal child or of the cross as both mere tree and cosmic symbol. For Lévi-Strauss, the notion of mediation between polar extremes is central, although there is probably more to the problem than just this, and we have already noted the interpenetration or "uncertainty" of symbol meanings. The difference here between Lévi-Strauss and his detractors may, however, be largely one of vocabulary, and the union of

¹⁴³ Jung, Archetypes, p. 269.

¹⁴⁴ Cf. Eliade, Patterns, pp. 15, 384, 418-19.

¹⁴⁵ Jung and Kerényi, p. 53. Although Kerényi is speaking here of one particular mythologem, his statement applies generally. Eliade, The Sacred and the Profane, p. 12, refers to this duality as the paradox of hierophanies, whereby any object manifesting the sacred "becomes something else, yet it continues to remain itself."

opposites includes within it much of the general and indefinable. With regard to medieval thought and art, it is enough to glance through Rabanus Maurus's Allegoriae in order to see the multivalent value of symbols. Once again, this "uncertainty" of symbol meanings is the reason for choosing the general categories of images which we will be considering in this essay and justifies as well the consideration of various anthropological and comparative data, which might otherwise seem only marginally relevant. In addition, it effectively does away with the problem of "influence" in the treatment of Old Norse materials. The correspondence between Christian and Old Norse pagan symbols has long been noted, and the similarities, for instance, between Loki and Satan, Baldr and Christ, or Yggdrasil and the cross are quite apparent, but it is not in our context strictly relevant which way the influence may have flowed, since both are in any case expressions of the same unconscious religious preoccupations.

One remaining objection to our method as a whole might be raised, and that is, that it is invalid to consider both conscious and unconscious poetic input under the same rubric, that one must consider either conscious and explicit associations, clearly drawn from the Church Fathers and the contemporary Ideenkreis, or unconscious associations, common, perhaps, to all men, but that one cannot do both things at once. This is a cogent point, although it ignores in some degree the intimate relation between the conscious and unconscious spheres, and espec-

ially, between unconscious processes and theological truth. Speaking generally, it is clear that although psychic symbols are grounded on an unconscious archetype, their external forms are molded by conscious ideas and that every symbol has both an objective and a subjective level--in other words, that it partakes of outside factors in the environment as well as of factors pertaining only to the psyche itself.¹⁴⁶ With regard to Anglo-Saxon poetry, this means that the scop, in expressing an unconscious archetype, would tend to draw his symbols, whether consciously or not, from the Bible and the Fathers, and the combination of conscious and unconscious processes at work here is clear. Christian truth and mythological symbols are specifically related, and "dogma takes the place of the collective unconscious by formulating its contents on the grand scale."¹⁴⁷ Stated in more directly mythic terms, "myth expresses in action...what...theology defines dialectically,"¹⁴⁸ and Northrop Frye points out, in a similar vein, that theology is the existential projection of mythology.¹⁴⁹ This being the case, one is certainly justified in using such a combined approach as the one we have outlined above.

With Old English poetry, the question is one of just

¹⁴⁶ See Jung, Symbols of Transformation, p. 232, Archetypes, p. 5, Psychology and Religion, p. 253, and Psychological Types, pp. 456, 472-3.

¹⁴⁷ Jung, Archetypes, p. 12.

¹⁴⁸ Eliade, Patterns, p. 418.

¹⁴⁹ Frye, Anatomy, p. 64.

how far this method can be applied and where one must draw the line between poetic input--of whatever sort--and mere interpretative ingenuity. We have already spoken of the need for discretion and have pointed to the generality of our symbolic groups as some justification for the broad scope of our analysis, and in addition, there are certainly enough explicit hints at allegory and symbol in Old English to warrant our looking for others. The clearest example of allegory in Old English is The Phoenix, and the poet here tells us specifically that the emblematic meaning of the bird, however well he may have explained it, will only fully become clear in the Last Days.

Þonne on leoht cymeð
 ældum þisses in þa openan tid
 fæger ond gefeallic fugles tacen,
 þonne anwald eal up astelleð
 of byrgenum, þan gegædrað,
 leomu lic somod, ond lifes gæst,
 fore Cristes cneo (508b-14a),

and this indicates that there is meaning in the allegory which is yet to be discovered. Similarly, the esoteric interpretation of the Pater Noster given in the Old English Solomon and Saturn (39-169) demonstrates the necessity for allegorical/symbolic interpretation, even though the poem itself is not an allegory. So in Andreas does the poet draw numerous parallels between the apostle and Christ,¹⁵⁰ so that our knowledge of the latter can tell us about the former and so that we can read the entire poem as emblematically referring to the process of Chris-

¹⁵⁰ See, for instance, 970-2, 1320ff., and 1405ff.

tian salvation. One can also take several sorts of approaches to Elene, as dealing with, for instance, either baptism or conversion or the eschatology of the cross, all three of which are intimately connected,¹⁵¹ or one can take it as an emblematic representation of the practice of typology, with the contrast being one of Jewish Law and Christian truth, the latter of which subsumes the former. The important point here is merely that there is wide room for the symbolic and emblematic interpretation of Old English poetry, while still remaining within the bounds of hermeneutic viability, and the next three chapters will demonstrate this in detail with respect to the three imagery patterns we have chosen for our particular examination. The Exodus-poet perhaps best sums up the need for such an approach when he tells his audience directly, "Gehyre se ðe wille" (7b).

¹⁵¹ For a fuller discussion of these themes in Elene, see below, pp. 114-15, 171-79.

Chapter Two

Sea Imagery

In religious and literary tradition, the sea and various more general images of fluidity have numerous, often conflicting or antithetical, meanings, and these meanings or associations are reflected in Old English poetry with sufficient clarity to make a reconsideration of certain Old English sea-passages a useful task. On the most basic level, the sea is the realm of the dead. In classical times, this was expressed in the notion of the River Styx, which one must cross at death, or similarly, in that of the watery entrance to Avernus, as it is described, for instance, by Vergil.¹ Much later, in patristic tradition, Gregory the Great interprets the sea as "aeternae mortis profunda,"² and for him, crossing the sea is the symbolic equivalent of descent to the underworld.³ Rabanus Maurus interprets it simply as "infernus."⁴ As such, it is specifically the locus allotted to Satan, although we shall consider this particular attribute of the sea as "realm of the dead" more fully in a later context. In Old English, this general association

¹ Aeneid, vi, 237-42. For further references on the chthonic nature of the sea in classical antiquity, see Martin Ninck, "Die Bedeutung des Wassers im Kult und Leben der Alten," Philologus, Supplementband 14, Heft 2 (1921), pp. 1-46.

² Homiliae in Evangelia, xi, 4 (PL, 76, 1116B).

³ Moralia in Job, xxix, 12 (PL, 76, 489).

⁴ Allegoriae in Universam Sacram Scripturam (PL, 112, 995).

of the sea with death is made in the passage describing the ship-burial of Scyld (Beowulf, 26-52), and this is paralleled in Old Norse by the ship-burial of Baldr, as recounted in Snorra Edda.⁵

Water represents a state of, or return to, pre-formal chaos, from which creation and regeneration are potentially possible, just as do the primordial waters of Genesis 1:2. Journey on or to the sea thus indicates a change in ontological or social status, and Scyld's "death-journey" is paralleled by his originally having come over the sea as a child (43-6), as a result of which, he was in some sense "born" into the heroic world. The notion of a journey, particularly by sea, is an important one in Old English, and the idea of personal growth or change is often attached to it. Thomas Hill suggests the figural significance in Andreas of floods and the journey by sea in the conversion of the Mermedonians, which, he says, would seem more or less arbitrary and pointless if merely considered on the literal level.⁶ Andreas's quest, which results in the conversion of the heathens, results also in his own fulfillment. He is at

⁵ Guðni Jónsson, ed., Edda Snorra Sturlusonar (Akureyri: Íslendingasagnaútgáfan, 1954), p. 81. For further references on the association of the sea with death, both in Old English and in the Bible, see Ute Schwab, "Eva reicht den Todesbecher: Zur Trinkmetaphorik in alt-englischen Darstellungen des Sündenfalles," Atti dell'Accademia Peloritana, 51 (1974), pp. 10-11. She also cites (p. 11) Gregory's interpretation of the sea as "aeternae mortis profunda."

⁶ Thomas D. Hill, "Figural Narrative in Andreas: The Conversion of the Mermedonians," NM, 70 (1969), 261-73.

first reluctant to go among the Mermedonians (190-201), but by the end he is a self-assured Christian saint, and the intervening voyage and his conversation with Christ are crucial factors in his development. In The Wanderer and The Seafarer, journey on the sea is the catalyst to the development of the personae, and Beowulf's voyage to Denmark (Beowulf, 210-24) is the necessary forerunner to the change which Beowulf will effect by his vanquishing of the Grendel clan. So Robert W. Hanning notes that movement across bodies of water is one of the recurrent narrative devices through which Gildas links the various sections of his De excidio et conquestu Brittaniae.⁷ In Old Icelandic, sea journeys are equally significant, and the young men of the sagas always travel away for a number of years in pursuit of renown and glory. This is of course an archetypal pattern, no more particularly characteristic of Germanic literature than of any other, and one could just as easily cite The Odyssey, The Faerie Queene, or The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym.

Much related to this notion of the developmental nature of sea travel is the idea of the sea as a metaphor for life.⁸ Rabanus Maurus, in his useful collection of scriptural allegories, defines mare as meaning both "mundus" and "saecularis occupatio," referring in the

⁷ Robert W. Hanning, The Vision of History in Early Britain from Gildas to Geoffrey of Monmouth (London: Columbia University Press, 1966), p. 51.

⁸ For a discussion of this metaphor generally in classical and patristic tradition, see Hugo Rahner, "Antenna Crucis II: Das Meer der Welt," ZKT, 66 (1942), 89-118.

latter case to Ps. 106:23,⁹ and he was doubtless familiar with Augustine's interpretation of this verse,¹⁰ in which Augustine equates the aquae of the Psalm with the populi of this world, referring to Apoc. 17:15,

Et dixit mihi: Aquae, quas vidisti ubi
meretrix sedet, populi sunt, et gentes,
et linguae.

In the New Testament, the Kingdom of God is characterized as a "sagena" (Mt. 13:47) and the Apostles as "piscatores hominum" (Mt. 4:19; Mk. 1:17), and from this Rahner justly concludes that Christ himself thought of the world as a sea.¹¹ Boethius, in the De consolatione philosophiae, frequently uses this metaphor as well, as do both Bede and Eddius Stephanus.¹²

This tradition clearly carries over into Old English. In Christ I, for example, "sundbuend" (73a, 221b) is used as a metaphor for men, and in Christ II, Cynewulf gives this tradition much more elaborate expression, describing the journey which one must make through life, as through the sea, with Christ as one's anchor.

Nu is þon gelicost swa we on laguflode
ofer cald wæter ceolum liðan
geond sidne sæ, sundhengestum,
flodwudu fergen. Is þæt frecne stream

⁹ Allegoriae (PL, 112, 995).

¹⁰ Enarrationes in Psalmos, cvi, 8 (PL, 37, 1425).
See also PL, 35, 2026, and De doctrina, iiii, 25, 36 (PL, 34, 79).

¹¹ Rahner, "Das Meer der Welt," p. 104.

¹² See, for example, Boethius, De consolatione philosophiae, i, Met. 2, Pro. 3 (PL, 63, 593, 608-09); Bede, Historia Ecclesiastica, ii, I (PL, 95, 77C, 79D); Vita Sancti Cuthberti, viii (PL, 94, 744C); and Eddius Stephanus, The Life of Bishop Wilfrid, ed. Bertram Colgrave (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1927), ch. 21.

yða ofermæta þe we her on lacað
geond þas wacan woruld, windge holmas
ofer deop gelad. Wæs se drohtað strong
ærpon we to londe geliden hæfdon
ofer hrecne hrycg. Þa us help bicwom,
þæt us to hælo hyge gelædde,
godes gæstsunu, ond us giefse sealde
þæt we oncnawan magun ofer ceoles bord
hwær we sælan sceolon sundhengestas,
ealde yðmearas, ancum fæste.
Utan us to þære hyðe hyht stapelian,
ða us gerymde rodera waldend,
halge on heahþu, þa he heofonum astag. (850-66)

Cook, in his edition of the poem,¹³ indicates the source of this passage as being Gregory the Great's Homiliae in Evangelia, xxix, 11,¹⁴ but it is actually part of a much wider general tradition and is reflected as well in Andreas's sea journey with Christ as the helmsman (Andreas, 349-826), during which the apostle proves his worthiness through long spiritual examination. God is also described as a helmsman, guiding one through the sea of life, in Boethius, De consolazione philosophiae, iii, Pro. 12.¹⁵ Clearly relevant here is the common motif of the ship as the ship of the Church, which would have Christ as its helmsman and the Kingdom of Heaven, mystically expressed in the corpus Christi, as its haven, and for Augustine, Noah's ark is a figure of the City of God sojourning in this world, temporarily divorced from God's presence.¹⁶ Rahner points out, in connection with this

¹³ Albert S. Cook, ed., The Christ of Cynewulf (Boston: Ginn and Co., 1900), p. 167.

¹⁴ PL, 76, 1219BC.

¹⁵ PL, 63, 780. Cf. Walter John Sedgefield, ed., King Alfred's Old English Version of Boethius (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1899), p. 100.

¹⁶ De civitate Dei, xv, 26 (PL, 41, 472).

topos, that according to Clement of Alexandria, Christians were fond of wearing a signet ring with the engraving upon it of a ship voyaging to heaven, its sails filled with the wind of the spirit,¹⁷ and the voyage of the ship of the Church is meant to be both purposeful and successful. We will discuss this theme more fully in the following chapter, but it is certainly well to keep it in mind in the present connection.

In classical and patristic writings, there is a clear contrast between the daring, horrific, and vaguely supernatural nature of voyage on the sea and the easy life of city-dwellers, who cannot possibly understand.¹⁸ In other words, there is something of the heroic about anyone who is bold enough to travel on the sea at all, and this provides an a priori context for the voyages of men like Beowulf on the one hand and of people like Andreas, Elene, or the non-specific Christian penitent on the other. The merchant in Ælfric's Colloquy speaks of the dangers of travelling over the sea,¹⁹ and by law the merchant who crossed the sea three times at his own expense was entitled to the status of gesið.²⁰ In the Old

¹⁷ Hugo Rahner, "Antenna Crucis I: Odysseus am Mastbaum," ZKT, 65 (1941), p. 129. He cites Paedagogus, III, xi, 59, 2 (PG, 8, 633).

¹⁸ See Rahner, "Das Meer der Welt," p. 92 et passim, and Greek Myths and Christian Mystery (London: Burns and Oates, 1963), pp. 342ff.

¹⁹ G.N. Garmonsway, ed., Ælfric's Colloquy, 2nd ed. (1947; rpt. London: Methuen, 1967), ll. 156-7.

²⁰ F. Liebermann, ed., Die Gesetze der Angelsachsen, vol. I (Halle: Max Niemeyer, 1903), p. 456; cited in Colloquy, p. 34n.

English Apollonius of Tyre, Apollonius refers to the sea as "manna bereafigend and unscæððigra beswicend,"²¹ and in Solomon and Saturn, Solomon sums up the entire situation by saying simply, "Dol bið se ðe gæð on deop wæter" (225), since he may never reach land again. An interesting Old Norse parallel appears in Gylfaginning. When describing the creation of the earth from the body of the slain giant Ymir and the creation of the circumjacent sea from his blood, Jafnhárr says of the sea that "mun þat flestum manni ófæra þykkja at komast þar yfir,"²² and it is significant that crossing the sea would only seem impossible to "most men," a category into which the heroes of our poems simply do not fall. Since only the brave cross the sea, Beowulf's sea-voyage, as does his swimming match with Breca, foreshadows both the danger of his encounter with Grendel and that of the fight with Grendel's mother in the descent of the watery mere. In Andreas, Christ tells the Apostle,

Is se drohtað strang
þam þe lagolade lange cunnap (313b-14),

and Andreas's voyage, in a manner similar to Beowulf's, foreshadows the danger he is to face among the Mermedonians. Analogously, Elene's voyage is clearly related to her forthcoming encounter with the Jews. In Christ II, as we have already shown, the sea is described as "þæt frecne stream" (853b), and in Genesis A, the voyage in

²¹ Peter Goolden, ed., The Old English Apollonius of Tyre (London: Oxford University Press, 1958), p. 16.

²² Snorra Edda, p. 18.

the ark is "freccenra siða" (1427b). Those in the ark are, in their turn, the eight best people on earth and the prospective founders of a new nation. The poet of the Old English Exodus also makes the contrast between land-men and sea-men, but we will defer our discussion of this, and of the other nautical imagery in the poem, until the next chapter.²³

The locus classicus for the contrast between land-men and sea-men is The Seafarer, 27-30.

Forþon him gelyfeð lyt, se þe aħ lifes wyn
gebiden in burgum, bealosipa hwon,
wlonc ond wingal, hu ic werig oft
in brimlade bidan sceolde.

Although the seafarer's life is hard and dreary, it is still superior to that of those people who remain on land "wlonc ond wingal." Mrs. Gordon points out, in her note to this line, that the expression "wlonc ond wingal" is "evidently an alliterative formula and need not imply any disapprobation,"²⁴ but in light of the tradition we have been considering, there is certainly some implication of superiority on the part of the Seafarer. In this tradition of the contrast between land and sea dwellers, the ship of the Church has left behind her on the shore all hopes for this world and has pledged herself solely to the next,²⁵ and so it is for the Seafarer, who comes to the realization that

²³ See below, pp. 155-66.

²⁴ I.L. Gordon, ed., The Seafarer (London: Methuen, 1960), p. 37n.

²⁵ Rahner, Greek Myths and Christian Mystery, p. 346.

The sea well reflects the bitterness and flux of earthly life,²⁹ and according to St. Augustine, its brackishness flowed from the side of the fallen Adam,³⁰ and its waters represent sinful men.³¹ Before the Fall,

³¹ Enarrationes in Psalmos, cxxiii, 6 (PL, 37, 1644).

he says, Adam and Eve were agitated by no mental perturbations,³² and the flux of the sea indicates the loss, occasioned by sin, of this prelapsarian state. It is significant that, in the Old English Genesis B, when Adam considers the consequences of his actions, he specifically mentions "on flod faran" (832a). In Resignation, the persona's lamentation and misery over his sins are linked with thoughts of the sea--

Ic bi me tylgust
secge þis sarspel ond ymb sip spræce,
longunge fus, ond on lagu pence (96b-98)--

and the natural consequence of sin is a journey of exile "on lagu."³³ In the other elegies as well, the miseries of the personae are directly related to the sea. In The Wife's Lament, the speaker's trouble starts with the departure of her lord "ofer ypa gelac" (6a), and this has brought misery and isolation, both for her and for her lord. At the end of the poem, her lord's misery, and by extension her own, is expressed by the stone-cliffs, the storm, and the flowing water.

under stanhlife ...min freond siteð
storme behrimed,

³² De civitate Dei, xiv, 10 (PL, 41, 417).

³³ In connection with this sin-misery-sea relationship, it is interesting to note that, according to St. Augustine, sin perverts one's ability to choose the right, and misery is its unavoidable concomitant; cf. Enarrationes in Psalmos, xxxii, 2, 15 (PL, 36, 293) and De libero arbitrio, iii, 9 and 18 (PL, 32, 1283-4, 1295-6). The first and last of these are cited by Catherine A. Regan, "Evangelicalism as the Informing Principle of Cynewulf's Elene," Traditio, 29 (1973), pp. 31-2, and the second is cited by D.W. Robertson, Jr., A Preface to Chaucer: Studies in Medieval Perspectives (1962; rpt. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969), p. 119. See also De libero arbitrio, i, 11, 22 and ii, 9, 26 (PL, 32, 1233, 1254).

wine werigmod, wætre beflowen
on dreorsele (47b-50a).

This is made explicit in the two lines immediately following.

Dreogeð se min wine
micle modceare; he gemon to oft
wynlicran wic (50b-52a).

The close juxtaposition of undesirable place and undesirable state of mind is clearly meant to relate the two. Similarly, in The Husband's Message, it is the "sealte streamas" (4b) which separate the husband from his spouse, even though here there is still some hope for their reunion, and in Wulf and Eadwacer as well, the misery-producing separation and isolation is expressed in terms of water.

Wulf is on iége, ic on oþerre.
Fæst is þæt eglond, fenne biworpen (4-5).

Again, the undesirable place is meant to reflect the speaker's sadness, especially as in the line, "þonne hit was renig weder ond ic reotugu sæt" (10).

The brackishness of the sea indicates the bitterness and misery of man's fallen state, and the relationship between the two in these elegies is not accidental. In theological terms, just as Adam was exiled because of sin, so are we all exiles through Adam's fall. Stanley Greenfield, in his article on the theme of exile in Old English poetry,³⁴ notes four of the elements in the formulaic expression of this theme as being descriptions of

³⁴ Stanley B. Greenfield, "The Formulaic Expression of the Theme of 'Exile' in Anglo-Saxon Poetry," Speculum, 30 (1955), p. 201.

the exile's status, his deprivation, his state of mind, and his continuative motion in exile. The most important of these is undoubtedly the last and best demonstrates the instability and chaos of the exile's lot. The very fact, in The Wanderer and The Seafarer, of being on the sea indicates this state of flux, and the association of watery chaos with death, as we have mentioned above, relates directly to the notion of exiled man as having suffered death for Adam's sin.

In The Wanderer, God's grace and sea-travel are contrasted from the very start.

Oft him anhaga are gebideð,
metudes miltse, beah þe he modcearig
geond lagulade longe sceolde
hreran mid hondum hrimcealde sæ,
wadan wræclastas (1-5a).

One who travels through the "hrimcealde sæ," as the Wanderer does, can only wait for mercy, and in light of the tradition we have been considering, the chaotic waters themselves become equivalent to the lack of grace and are a metaphoric expression for the spiritually lost condition of the Wanderer. In some sense, he is no more than a representative of the fallen physical world, and the interpretation of both the Wanderer and the Seafarer as exiles from heaven has already been proposed.³⁵ The

³⁵ See, for example, G.V. Smithers, "The Meaning of The Seafarer and The Wanderer," MAE, 26 (1957), 137-53. For slightly different allegorical interpretations of The Seafarer alone, see G. Ehrismann, "Religionsgeschichte-liche Beiträge zur germanischen Frühchristentum II: Das gedicht vom Seefahrer," Beiträge zur Geschichte der deutschen Sprache und Literatur, 35 (1909), 213-18, and O.S. Anderson, "The Seafarer: An Interpretation," Kungliga Humanistiska Vetenskapssamfundets i Lund Årsberättelse, 1937-8, 1-49. For the interpretation of the Seafarer as

contrast between the earthly care of the exile and heavenly joy is made clear in the expressions "sorg bið geniwad" (50b) and "cearo bið geniwad" (55b), which constitute the formulaic inverses of the expression "hyht wæs geniwad," commonly used in Old English verse to refer to man's being freed from the second death through the efficacy of the Atonement, as well as to the hope of eternal glory which comes upon the Christian saint in articulo mortis.³⁶ In the last two lines of the poem, the Wanderer makes the contrasting comparison to that of the first four lines.

Wel bið þam þe him are seceð,
frofre to fæder on heofonum, þær us eal seo
fæstnung stondeð (114b-15).

Grace is not to be found on the sea, but in heaven. As the one symbolizes the changefulness and misery of life, so does the other symbolize permanence and stability. It is the harbor whither the ship of the Church is bound. In both The Wanderer and The Seafarer, the association of the sea with death is a telling one, especially since exile on earth is the temporal analogue of the second

a literal peregrinus, see Dorothy Whitelock, "The Interpretation of The Seafarer," in The Early Cultures of North-West Europe, ed. Sir Cyril Fox and Bruce Dickins (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1950), 261-72. E.G. Stanley, "Old English Poetic Diction and the Interpretation of The Wanderer, The Seafarer, and The Penitent's Prayer," Anglia, 73 (1956), 413-66, contends that there is no precise demarcation between fact and figure in Old English poetry and that The Wanderer and The Seafarer are consequently neither realistic nor allegorical.

³⁶ Cf. Dream of the Rood, 148, Christ II, 529, Andreas, 1010, and Guthlac B, 953; also Judith, 98, and Juliana, 607. For expressions analogous to those used in The Wanderer, see Beowulf, 1303, 1322, and 2287.

death brought about by Adam's transgression. Their voyages are in some sense the "living death" of renunciation which is necessary for admission to the ship of the Church and finally to the Kingdom of Heaven.

The exile's status and "continuative motion" are not, as we have seen, purely physical, and even more important is the exile's mental agitation. It is only by becoming "snottor on mode" (Wanderer, 111) that the exile, deprived of his homeland, can eventually find definition and a value system which transcends any earthly related philosophy to which he hitherto may have adhered and which is now irrelevant.³⁷ The Seafarer says, "hungor innan slat merewerges mod" (11b-12a), and his mind roams outward and returns to him "gifre ond grædig" (62a), which almost makes one think in terms of some sort of proto-Johnsonian "hunger of the imagination," and only as he grows in wisdom does he realize that the values of the earthly comitatus, to which he can no longer return, find their final expression in heaven.³⁸ There is the "dream

³⁷ T.P. Dunning and A.J. Bliss, in their edition of the poem, The Wanderer (London: Methuen, 1969), pp. 78-93, trace the Wanderer's development from modcearig to snottor on mode and discuss the structural importance of such development.

³⁸ Peter Clemons, "Mens Absentia Cogitans in The Seafarer and The Wanderer," in Medieval Literature and Civilization: Studies in Memory of G.N. Garmonsway, ed. D.A. Pearson and D.A. Waldron (London: Athlone Press, 1969), 62-77, discusses the theme of mental wandering and traces the conceptions of this phenomenon in The Seafarer and The Wanderer to probable sources in Ambrose and Alcuin. See also Vivian Salmon, "The Wanderer and The Seafarer, and the Old English Conception of the Soul," MLR, 55 (1960), 1-10, who gives numerous examples from both Old English and Old Norse for the notion that the soul was separate from the body and left it at various times, and

mid dugupum" which he has been denied on earth. What seems desirable in this world has its only "real" existence in heaven,³⁹ and the pleasures he recalls are only a dream. This mental strife which is the unavoidable concomitant of the exile state is not characteristic of the Wanderer and the Seafarer alone, but it can also be seen in Guthlac's psychomachia, in which the good spirit and the bad strive for his soul (Guthlac A, 114-32).

This is a mental care which he is obliged to support before he can obtain eternal joy, and it is indeed much more important than the mere physical torments of this life.

This physical and mental unrest is in exact opposition to the nature of the heavenly homeland, the essence of which, according to St. Augustine, is perpetual peace,⁴⁰ and in Andreas the disciple's followers say,

Ninck, p. 57, who cites classical references for the same phenomenon. Note also Aeneid, iv, 285-6, Boethius, De consolacione philosophiae, iv, Met. 1 and Pro. 1 (PL, 63, 788), and Meters of Boethius, xxiv, 1-11a. The soul often took the form of a bird, and Rabanus, for instance, interprets the bird of Job 5:7 as anima hominis (PL, 112, 871C). The theme is a common one.

³⁹ James L. Rosier, "The Literal-Figurative Identity of The Wanderer," PMLA, 79 (1964), 366-9, discusses the idea of "fastness" in The Wanderer, developed by means of lexical generation, as an attribute of mind and existence, in which one is bound on earth and only possesses "real" security in heaven. Roger Fowler, "A Theme in The Wanderer," ML, 36 (1967), 1-14, similarly sees the poem as dealing with the contrast between divine permanence and earthly mutability.

⁴⁰ "...summum bonum civitatis Dei...aeterna pax atque perfecta [est], non per quam mortales transeant nascendo atque moriendo, sed in qua immortales maneant nihil adversi omnino patiundo." De civitate Dei, xix, 20 (PL, 41, 618).

"næs þær ænigum gewinn" (888b). Indeed, Jerusalem, the mystical name of the Heavenly City, means "Vision of Peace."⁴¹ The earthly city has its good, to which the unenlightened man, like the Wanderer, can relate, but its peace is not eternal and is only purchased at the expense of "laboriosa bella."⁴² Lack of strife would be particularly significant in a Germanic society, where ongoing conflict is a basic fact of life.

The Christian, voyaging on the sea of life, must remember the example of Christ, whose nature is mystically understood in the symbol of the fish,

eo quod in huius mortalitatis abyssso velut
in aquarum profunditate vivus, hoc est
sine peccato, esse potuerit.⁴³

The waters of life are rendered brackish through sin, and it is thus of the utmost significance that Christ was able to live in the abyss of mortality "sine peccato." The bitter waters of life can only be made sweet through the efficacy of the Incarnation, and we are the pisciculi, landing in the ship of the Church, called by Christ from the bitter depths of the sea, and drawn by the fish-hook which is the word of God.⁴⁴ Ambrose, indeed, exhorts

⁴¹ De civitate Dei, xix, 11 (PL, 41, 657). See also Christ I, 50; R. Morris, ed., The Blickling Homilies, EETS 58, 63, 73 (1874-80; rpt. London: Oxford University Press, 1967), p. 81; Vita Sancti Cuthberti, xl (PL, 94, 782A); and further references cited in Cook, The Christ of Cynewulf, pp. 81-2, and Fred C. Robinson, "Some Uses of Name-Meanings in Old English Poetry," NM, 69 (1968), p. 161.

⁴² De civitate Dei, xv, 4 (PL, 41, 440).

⁴³ Ibid., xviii, 23 (PL, 41, 580).

⁴⁴ See Hugo Rahner, "Navicula Petri: Zur Symbol-

us to imitate the fish, who stays afloat no matter how rough the weather, that the storms of this world sink us not,⁴⁵ and Ælfric says, speaking in a similar vein,

Se fisc getacnað geleafan, forðan ðe his
gecynd is, swa hine swiðor ða yða wealcað,
swa he strengra bið, and swiðor batað.
Swa eac se geleafulla man, swa he swiðor
bið geswenct for his geleafan, swa se ge-
leafa strengra bið, þær ðær he æltæwe bið.⁴⁶

So in the Old English Physiologus are men the "sæfisca cynn" (The Whale, 56a) who must guard themselves against the wiles of Satan. Nor is this analogy exclusively the property of Christianity, since in Rabbinical Judaism, the fish in the water was held to represent the faithful Israelite,⁴⁷ and in Egyptian religion, the fish was a symbol of the soul.⁴⁸

The fear with which the sea was looked upon as the source of death and ruin is clearly reflected in both classical and patristic tradition, and sea travel,

geschichte des römischen Primats," ZKT, 69 (1947), pp. 10-12, and Jean Daniélou, The Bible and the Liturgy (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1960), p. 74. On fish symbolism in early Christian art and iconography generally, see Franz Joseph Dölger, IXΘΥC, 5 vols. (Münster: Aschendorff, 1922-43) and Hans Achelis, Das Symbol des Fisches und die Fischdenkmäler der römischen Katakomben (Marburg: 1888).

⁴⁵ Ambrose, De sacramentis, iii, 1, 3 (PL, 16, 451A).

⁴⁶ Benjamin Thorpe, ed., The Homilies of the Anglo-Saxon Church (London: 1844-6), I, p. 250.

⁴⁷ I. Scheftelowitz, "Das Fisch-Symbol im Judentum und Christentum," ARW, 14 (1911), pp. 2-6.

⁴⁸ W. Spiegelberg, "Der Fisch als Symbol der Seele," ARW, 12 (1909), 574-5. For the relation of the fish and the soul in Germanic terms, see Josef Weisweiler, "Seele und See: Ein etymologischer Versuch," Indogermanische Forschungen, 57 (1939), p. 46.

whether on the literal sea or on the metaphorical sea of life, was held to be quite a perilous affair. In Genesis A, as we have mentioned, Noah's voyage is "freccenra siða" (1427b), and even in more recent times, the sea represents constant hardship and danger, as in, for instance, modern Norwegian folktale.⁴⁹ The close juxtaposition of life and death implied by travel over the stormy waters in the frail ship of wood, and the idea of the perilous voyage leading nonetheless to one's final goal, became a Christian dialectic, demonstrating the action of grace upon the soul.⁵⁰ So in the Aeneid, the realm of Avernus is so inimical to all life that Aeneas can only enter the underworld through the efficacy of special divine intervention, given him in the form of the golden bough. Here the gods side with man against the hostile terrors of the underworld, and in a very basic sense, what is inimical to man is also, by definition, hostile to man's creator. This is well expressed in Genesis B, where Satan strikes at man only because, being godes andsaca, he cannot strike back directly at God.

We þæs sculon hycgan georne,
 þæt we on Adame, gif we æfre mægen,
 and on his eafrum swa some, andan gebetan,
 onwendan him þær willan sines, gif we hit mægen
 wihte apencan.
 Ne gelyfe ic me nu þæs leohted furðor þæs þe he
 him þenceð lange niotan,
 þæs eades mid his engla cræfte. Ne magon we þæt
 on aldre gewinnan,

49 Reidar Christiansen, ed., Folktales of Norway
(Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1964), p. xxx.

50 Hugo Rahner, Greek Myths and Christian Mystery, p. 345. This danger is in fact necessary; without it, the voyage of the ship of the Church would be meaningless.

þæt we mihtiges godes mod onwæcen. Uton oðwendan
 hit nu monna bearnum,
 þæt heofonrice, nu we hit habban ne moton, gedon
 þæt hie his hylde forlæten,
 þæt hie þæt onwendon þæt he mid his worde bebed.
 Þonne weorð he him wrað on mode,
 ahwet hie from his hylde. (397b-406a)

The sea is inimical to man, and just as it is so, it
 is characterized as symbolizing all that is hostile to
 God.⁵¹ What was at first the home of the classical demons
 became in time the realm of Satan, to whom St. Augustine
 refers as having been cast into the abyss, the abyss
 representing the multitude of the wicked.

Et misit illum, inquit, in abyssum: utique
diabolum misit in abyssum. Quo nomine
significata est multitudo innumerabilis
impiorum, quorum in malignitate adversus
Ecclesiam Dei multum profunda sunt corda.⁵²

In Norse mythology, the sea was created from the blood of
 the slain giant Ymir, and thus, in some sense, it has its
 source in opposition to the gods, since the giants were
 the well-known antagonists of the Æsir. This is parallel
 to the Greek notion of the sea as the tears of Kronos,
 and the Titans were, once again, the opponents of the
 gods. In Isaiah 57:20 and Jude 13, the wicked are com-
 pared to the raging waves of the sea, and in Micah 7:19,
 it is the sea in which the sins of the faithful will be
 sunk, just as in the Apocalypse (18:21), Babylon will be
 thrown into the sea in the Last Days. In Boethius, the
 storms on the sea of life are caused by evil men.⁵³

⁵¹ For the notion of the "evil sea" in classical and
 patristic tradition, see Rahner, "Das Meer der Welt,"
 pp. 96-118.

⁵² De civitate Dei, xx, 7 (PL, 41, 668).

⁵³ De consolatione philosophiae, i, Pro. 3 (PL, 63,
 608-09).

Augustine refers to the sea as the bitterness of men's wills--"neque enim amaritudo voluntatum, sed congregatio aquarum vocatur mare"⁵⁴--and for Bede, "designet fluctus mundi tentatis quibus probatur."⁵⁵ The drownings of the fourteen evil Mermedonians in the watery abyss (Andreas, 1591-95a) and of Eleusius and his wicked myrmidons (Juliana, 671b-82) are certainly relevant here.

As the realm of evil, the sea is traditionally held to be the natural habitat of serpents and monsters--beings such as the scriptural leviathan and the sea-beast of the Johannine Apocalypse, although this concept is hardly original with Judaeo-Christianity. Mircea Eliade has discussed the more archetypal associations of serpents and snakes, the animals of death and burial, with water and the sea, and he notes the recurrence of the theme of the monsters of the abyss.⁵⁶ He also notes the commonness of the motif of heroes going down into the sea and slaying such monsters, most often as some sort of initiatory ordeal, performed in the process of their quest for immortality,⁵⁷ a point which is particularly cogent in our Christian context. In Greek myth, according to G.S. Kirk,⁵⁸ monsters were the ideal enemy, and the more inhuman they were, the greater was the satis-

⁵⁴ Confessiones, xiii, 17 (PL, 32, 853).

⁵⁵ Hexameron, ii (PL, 91, 87A).

⁵⁶ Eliade, Patterns, pp. 207-10, and The Sacred and the Profane, p. 135 et passim.

⁵⁷ Eliade, Rites and Symbols of Initiation, pp. 61-6.

⁵⁸ Kirk, Myth, p. 191.

faction in the postlude to their dispatch. In addition, the monsters of Greek myth were symbolic of things "beyond," so conflict with them was in some sense cosmic conflict. This is similarly true of the monsters of Anglo-Saxon, who also represent something "beyond"--outcast from the society of men--but their humanity is important as well,

and the combination in Grendel--as in Satan--of the human and the chthonic takes on significance in a religious framework whose central mystery is the Incarnation--the combination in Christ of divinity and mortality.

In Christian terms, the snake in the abyss is Satan, as set forth in Apoc. 20:2, and this is commented upon by various of the Fathers.⁵⁹ The cetus or leviathan is specifically associated with the devil⁶⁰ and with the sins of evil men,⁶¹ and Rabanus Maurus interprets it variously as "mors," "diabolus," and "superba celsitudo imperii mundialis."⁶² This tradition is reflected in the Old English Physiologus, where the whale is compared to the wiles of Satan, upon which voyagers mistakenly encamp, only to be drawn down to their destruction, or into whose mouth, as fish, they mistakenly swim (The Whale, 19-31, 51-62). Cook, in the introduction to his edition of the

⁵⁹ See, for example, Gregory, Moralia in Job, xviii, 42 (PL, 76, 77AB).

⁶⁰ Gregory, PL, 75, 644, 824.

⁶¹ Cassiodorus, PL, 70, 730.

⁶² Allegoriae (PL, 112, 893).

poem, gives a fairly comprehensive account of the sources and background of this tradition.⁶³ In the light of this topos, one is perhaps justified in seeing some significance to the travel of the Seafarer's mind "ofer hwæles eðel" (60a; cf. 63a). The mental perturbation he describes (58-62b) is particularly the lot of fallen man, and his thoughts cannot yet rest on the heavenly fæstnug but are taken up with the tribulations and deceptions of postlapsarian mortality. They can only roam "ofer hwæles eðel" and to the "eorðan sceatas," and are not yet capable of breaking out of the bondage of this life. The expression is surely formulaic, but that in no way obviates the possibility of its having been used by design, and there are numerous other expressions which could have been used in its place. That his mind here is "gifre ond grædig" (62a) emphasizes the Seafarer's distance from heaven and the chthonic nature of the sea upon which he travels, since in the other five occurrences of this formula in Old English, twice it refers to hell (Genesis B, 793a, Christ and Satan, 32a), twice to the worms in the grave (Soul and Body I, 74a, Soul and Body II, 69a), and once to Satan's followers on their way to hell (Christ and Satan, 191a).

In Norse mythology, the evil serpent in the sea is Jörmungandr, the Miðgarðsormr, who was thrown there by Óðinn,⁶⁴ just as Satan was thrown into the abyss. The

⁶³ Albert S. Cook, ed., The Old English Elene, Phoenix, and Physiologus (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1919), pp. lxxiii-lxxxv.

⁶⁴ Snorra Edda, p. 46.

Miðgarðsormr is one of the three offspring of Loki, and it is quite commonplace to remark the relationship and similarities between Loki and Satan.⁶⁵ In patristic thought, the evil beast implicitly conquered by Noah in the Flood is parallel to the beast of the Apocalypse, who will rise up in the last days (Apoc. 11:7, 19:19).⁶⁶ The similarity of Christian and Old Norse eschatology here is striking, and in the Old Norse conception of the last days, Þórr will battle with and overcome the Miðgarðsormr.⁶⁷ Serpents are associated, not only with the sea, but with treasure. The general correspondence has been pointed out by both Eliade and Nilsson,⁶⁸ and this holds true for the Germanic world as well. Among treasure-hoarding dragons are Fáfnir and the dragon in Beowulf, and the words of the Anglo-Saxon maxim--"Draca sceal on hlæwe, frod, frætwum wlanc" (Maxims II, 26b-27a)--are often cited. Germanic society revolves around the fluid interchange of treasure, and a king is measured

⁶⁵ See, for instance, Rosemary Woolf, "The Devil in Old English Poetry," RES, n.s. 4 (1953), 1-12.

⁶⁶ Daniélou, From Shadows to Reality, pp. 88-9.

⁶⁷ As in Snorra Edda, pp. 88-9, Hymiskviða, 17-26, and Völuspá, 47-8. A parallel from Jewish eschatology is the notion that in the final Messianic rule, the Leviathan will be killed by Gabriel and his flesh will be eaten in banquet by the righteous, for which, see 1 Enoch 40:7-9 and 4 Esdras 6:49ff., cited in E.O. James, The Tree of Life: An Archaeological Study (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1966), p. 146. The edition of the Poetic Edda I have consulted is Guðni Jónsson, ed., Eddukvæði: (Sæmundar Edda), 2 vols. (Akureyri: Íslendingasagnautgáfan, 1954).

⁶⁸ Eliade, Patterns, p. 210; M.P. Nilsson, "The Dragon on the Treasure," American Journal of Philology, 68 (1947), 302-09, traces this tradition back to the Greek cult of Esculapius.

by his liberality in dispensing it--thus Hroðgar is a good king and Heremod a bad one. Dragons, who hoard their treasure, thus act in a manner contrary to the divinely appointed system of Germanic society, and in this way, both greed and evil are attached to them. So is greed for power the thing that leads Satan astray--the desire to rebel against the divinely ordered plan and to build himself a throne "heahran on heofonum" (Genesis B, 274a) than God's.

Christian baptism, in which one renounces the devil and his pomps and accepts Christ, is traditionally seen as conflict with the serpent, and as such, it has been well documented by Jean Daniélou.⁶⁹ The notion, however, is not indigenous to Christianity, and Eliade has noted the same configuration in primitive initiation rites, in which one renounces one's old way of life--as the Christian renounces his former life of sin--and takes on the new, and this is most often expressed in terms of a dangerous conflict with a serpent or monster, or even by the process of being swallowed and regurgitated.⁷⁰ It is a return to pre-formal chaos, followed by rebirth into a new life. In primitive societies, initiation is a reenactment of cosmogonic myth, and so it is in Christianity, although only as mediated by the sacrifice of the incarnate Christ, so that the Christian initiate's victory over the serpent is in direct imitation of the

⁶⁹ Daniélou, The Bible and the Liturgy, pp. 35-53.

⁷⁰ Eliade, Rites and Symbols of Initiation, pp. 35-7. For this latter, cf. the Biblical story of Jonah.

victory of Christ over Satan in the sea of this world.⁷¹ Rahner cites the tradition of Christ having sunk himself like a fishing-rod into the sea of this world and catching Satan, using his humanity as bait,⁷² and he refers to the relevant patristic sources. The tradition originated in a reading of Job 40:20-21,

An extrahere poteris leviathan hamo, Et
fune ligabis linguam eius? Numquid pones
circulum in maribus eius, Aut armilla
perforabis maxillam eius?

and it is interpreted in this light, for example, by Gregory the Great.⁷³ Christ was crucified to save men from the wiles of Satan, or in the nautical metaphor, from the shipwreck of this world, and only by his sacrifice can the blessings of the Incarnation be rendered efficacious. One is thus baptized into the death of Christ (Rom. 6:3-6) and is reborn as Christ himself arose from the dead. In the Old Testament, the Crossing of the Red Sea is the most common figure of baptism, and it symbolizes the victory achieved over Satan, both by Christ in his crucifixion, and by the Christian penitent in baptism. This notion of baptism as strife goes a long way toward explaining the often confusing combination of military and nautical imagery in the Old English Exodus, and James W. Earl, acting on the much ignored suggestion of James Bright, has convincingly demonstrated the rela-

⁷¹ See, for example, Ambrose, De fide, iv, 6 (PL, 16, 655C).

⁷² Rahner, "Das Meer der Welt," p. 110.

⁷³ Moralia in Job, xxxiii, 7 (PL, 76, 680).

tion of the Exodus to the baptismal liturgy.⁷⁴

The contrast in all this is one between the Kingdom of Heaven, ruled over by Christ and the ultimate goal of the civitas Dei sojourning on earth, and the sea of the world, ruled over by Satan (cf. 2 Cor 4:4), who is constantly trying to sink the ship of the Church. Storms and the turbulence of the sea are thus the work of the devil, and so Bede interprets the storm of Mt. 8:23-27.

Sunt qui allegorice hanc naviculam praesentem volunt significare Ecclesiam, ventos malignos Spiritus, et homines iniquos, qui desiderant ut Ecclesia fluctibus et pressuris immergatur; sed licet Jesus ad tempus auxilium subtrahendo dormire videatur, precibus tamen honestis suscitatus, malignorum spirituum incitationem compescere facit, et persecutorum minas mitigat, et flante aura Spiritus sancti, Ecclesiam ad aeternae quietis portam usque perducit.⁷⁵

However violent such storms may be, they can have no efficacy against those who follow Christ, and this accounts for the somewhat miraculous nature of Noah's ark, as described in the Old English Genesis A.

⁷⁴ James W. Earl, "Christian Traditions in the Old English Exodus," NM, 71 (1970), 541-70, and James W. Bright, "The Relation of the Caedmonian Exodus to the Liturgy," MLN, 27 (1912), 97-103. See also J.E. Cross and S.I. Tucker, "Allegorical Tradition and the Old English Exodus," Neophilologus, 44 (1960), 122-27, William Helder, "Etham and the Ethiopians in the Old English Exodus," AM, 16 (1975), 5-23, and Peter J. Lucas, ed., Exodus (London: Methuen, 1977), pp. 67-8. For further material on the Crossing of the Red Sea as a type of baptism, see Franz Joseph Dölger, "Der Durchzug durch das Rote Meer als Sinnbild der christlichen Taufe," AC, 2 (1930), 63-9. Among patristic sources, see Ambrose, PL, 14, 867; Augustine, PL, 35, 1723; PL, 36, 917; PL, 37, 1037, 1411, 1420; and Gregory, PL, 77, 1162.

⁷⁵ In Matthaei Evangelium Expositio, ii, 8 (PL, 92, 43).

ðæt is syndrig cynn;
 symle bið þy heardra þe hit hreoh wæter,
 swearte sæstreamas swiðor beatað (1324b-26).

In association with this passage, B.F. Huppé cites another example from Bede regarding the ship of the Church.

...sed et unde tribulationum frequenter
 Ecclesiam pulsantes, quanto vehementius
 omnia repleverunt, tanto altius eam ad
 quaerenda vitae alterius gaudia compa-
 lerunt.⁷⁶

The infernal power of the sea manifests itself, according to Rahner, in three main areas--Heathendom, Heresy, and Temptations--and these correspond in some sense to the "teuflische Dreifaltigkeit" of Satan, his son, Antichrist, and the Christ-opposing Pneuma.⁷⁷ Heathenism is conquered by conversion to Christianity, but then one has to deal with the heresies that arise, and through all, one must resist temptations. In the patristic interpretations of the Odyssey, the demons left behind at baptism still threaten Odysseus in the form of the Sirens, who represent both deadly lust and deadly knowledge--a knowledge which was first equated with Greek, as opposed to Christian, wisdom, and later with the heresies within the Christian Church.⁷⁸ All three types of

⁷⁶ Hexameron, 97; Huppé, Doctrine and Poetry, p. 169. Note the similarity between this passage and the one from Ælfric quoted above (p. 74), in which the fish is the tropological equivalent of Noah's ark/the ship of the Church.

⁷⁷ Rahner, "Das Meer der Welt," pp. 113-14.

⁷⁸ Rahner, "Odysseus am Mastbaum," passim, discusses the patristic interpretations of the seafaring Odysseus, tied to the mast, as a figure of Christ and the personification of wisdom.

the Satanic power of the sea are metaphorically expressed in Andreas's voyage to Mermedonia, although to none of them is the Apostle subject. In the first instance, he is travelling across the sea to convert the heathen, from which, with Christ as his guide, he cannot be prevented, and the spiritual examination through which Christ leads him in the course of the voyage succeeds in determining both his virtue and the correctness of his spiritual ideas. There can be no mistake but what Andreas's ship is the ship of the Church. Andreas tells the helmsman that he has never met a more skillful sailor (471-2) and that the boat in which they are travelling gives the smoothest, fastest ride he has ever seen (495-505). This is just as it would be with the ship of the Church, which is the fastest and surest means of reaching the harbor of salvation. When his retainers are frightened at the tossing of the sea, Andreas tells them,

Ic þæt sylfa wat,
þæt us gescyldeð scyppend engla,
weoruda dryhten. Wæteregeſa ſceal,
geðyð ond geðreatoð þurh þryðcining,
lagu lacende, liðra wyrðan (433b-37).

This is a reference to Mt. 8:23-27, of which we have already given Bede's interpretation, and the poet makes this explicit in the next twenty-two lines, where he has Andreas recount the "former time" in which Christ stilled the waves. A bit later, Christ says,

Oft þæt geſæleð, þæt we on sælade,
ſcipum under ſcealcum, þonne ſceor cymeð,
brecað ofer bæðweg, brimhengestum.
Hwylum us on yðum earfoðlice
geſæleð on sæwe, þeh we sið nesan,
frecne geferan. Flodwylm ne mæg
manna ænigne ofer meotudes eſt

lungre gelettan; ah him lifes geweald,
se ðe brimū bindeð, brune yða
ðyð ond preatað (511-20a),

and the spiritual import cannot be missed. The incident of Andreas stilling the flood (1575-86) is related here and indicates the development in Andreas, who was at first hesitant to go among the Mermedonians, but who is now a self-assured saint, acting in imitation of Christ. After the flood, Andreas raises up those who had formerly been drowned (1612-18)--metaphorically covered up in the sea of their sins--and then they are baptized. This juxtaposition of the flood and baptism is hardly accidental, and baptism is the physical manifestation of God's saving us from the "wateregesa."⁷⁹

Given what we now know about the various sea-images in Anglo-Saxon, it is possible for us to analyze a pair of passages from Beowulf--first, that of Beowulf's journey to Denmark (198-228), and then, that in which Beowulf recounts the story of his swimming match with Breca (529-89). In analyzing these passages, we do not wish to imply that Beowulf's voyage to Denmark was ever intended as a direct allegory of the ship of the Church travelling on the sea of life or that the Breca episode was ever meant to be an explicit statement about Christian baptism, but there are, however, certain interesting correspondences which must be pointed out, especially if we take into account the Christian Ideenkreis in which the Beowulf-poet was operating.

⁷⁹ For more on this relationship, see below, pp. 115-16.

Alvin Lee interprets Beowulf's journey to Denmark in the following manner.

The ship is a ship of life, with a clear destination and manned by fifteen willing companions--weras on wilsioð (men on a desired journey)--in the fullness of their powers, in vivid contrast with that earlier ship of death surrounded by mourning thanes reluctantly dispatching the dead Scyld Scefing to his unknown destination. 80

The "clear destination" of Beowulf and his companions reflects the purposefulness of the Christian voyage, and the willingness of the companions reminds one of the voluntary nature of the sacrifice made by those who give up the things of this world in order to enter the ship of the Church. The verbal juxtaposition "wudu bundenne" (216) as a term for the ship in which they travel, suggests the association of the Christian--or the figurally interpreted Odysseus--being bound to the mast of the ship of the Church, which is the cross of Christ, and indeed, this latter sea-voyage is only made possible through the efficacy of the crucifixion and glorification of the Lord. Similarly relevant is Beowulf's statement of his purpose.

ofer swanrade cwæð, he gudcýning
mærne beoden, secean wolde,
pa him was manna þearf (199b-20l).

He wishes to seek the guðcynning--Dominus exercituum?--the mærne beoden, over the swan-road, and the "need of men" which he fulfills calls to mind Christ's acquisition of the Apostles and their later function as piscatores hominum. This is followed by the statement that

Done siðfæt him snotere ceorlas
lythwon logon, beah he him leof wære (202-03),

⁸⁰ Lee, Guest-Hall, p. 199.

and it is significant that wise men approve of his undertaking. When he is described as a "lagucraftig mon" (209a), the reference may also be to his skillfulness in navigating the "sea of life"--he takes that course which is upheld by snotere ceorlas, and throughout the poem he demonstrates his heroic superiority to the adversities of life. At the very beginning of the scene, Beowulf is described as

...moncynnes mægenes strengest
on þam dæge biſses lifes,
æpele ond eacen (196-98a),

and this description aids in establishing his nobility.

It is not merely that he is the strongest man,
but he

is "æpele ond eacen" as well. Finally, at the end of the journey, they thank God for the ease of their passage (227b-28). Implicitly, it could not have gone so well without his aid, and this is the same divine help which the Christian voyager of Christ II considers to be so indispensable (856b-60). Lee is certainly correct in seeing a reflection here of Scyld's ship-burial, and Lee Ramsey sees in the connection the addition of a sense of mystery, fate, and meaningfulness to Beowulf's voyage.⁸¹ Ramsey points out as well the structural importance of Beowulf's two sea-voyages--the first introducing the hero and the second marking the transition to the second part of the poem--and he notes the significant use of such parallelism in the poem.⁸²

⁸¹ Lee C. Ramsey, "The Sea Voyages in Beowulf," NM, 72 (1971), p. 58.

⁸² Ibid., pp. 53-4.

The structural and thematic importance of Beowulf's swimming match with Breca is also clear.⁸³ It demonstrates the hero's superhuman powers and establishes him as a monster fighter, in prelude to his fights which follow. It also relates to the other sea passages in the poem and possesses the same kind of nodal value. We already know Beowulf as "lagucraftig," and here he says that he possessed more "merestrengo" (553a) than any other man, which certainly refers to his strength on the sea of life, and the "earfeþo on ypum" (534a) reminds one, for instance, of Bede's "unde tribulationum." Beowulf and Breca are both only boys--"git on geogoðfeore" (536b-37a)--and are just starting out on the sea of life. This is their initiation into manhood, and they demonstrate their ability, in anticipation, for fighting off the "monsters" of this life. They "risk life" (538a), just as one risks one's life against the monster in primitive initiation rites, and as the Christian catechumen must fight off Satan, the serpent in the baptismal pool as he is the serpent in the sea of life. Beowulf is not, it must be cautioned once again, a Christian catechumen, but one must recognize the metaphorical undercurrent of such an association, especially since it would have been known to

⁸³ Martin Puhvel, "The Swimming Prowess of Beowulf," Folklore, 82 (1971), 276-80, points out various Old Norse and Old Irish parallels to this episode, but however interesting, they are somewhat inconclusive here. Karl P. Wentersdorf, "Beowulf's Adventure with Breca," SP, 72 (1975), 140-66, contends that this is not a swimming match at all, but a rowing match. We do not subscribe to such a view here, although our interpretation is not materially affected by holding the one view rather than the other.

the poet, and Donahue is at least right in seeing swimming prowess as a "manifestation of Beowulf's God-given strength."⁸⁴

On their journey, they carry "sward nacod" (539a), with which to defend themselves, and although this may not necessarily be the gladius spiritus of Ephesians, one can certainly see it as an attempt to fight off the evil forces and immaturity of their "old life" and successfully achieve integration into the new, just as the Christian penitent would do in baptism. Beowulf says that their purpose was to defend themselves "wið hronfixas" (540b), which much supports our reading of the passage, if one remembers the patristic interpretation of "whales," as which this term can best be glossed.⁸⁵ In a Christian sense, they are fighting off Satan and the evils engendered by him in this world. All goes well for the first

⁸⁴ Charles Donahue, "Beowulf and Christian Tradition: A Reconsideration from a Celtic Stance," Traditio, 21 (1965), p. 99. For the view that the Breca episode is indeed a figure of Christian baptism, see Lewis E. Nicholson, "The Literal Meaning and Symbolic Structure of Beowulf," Classica et Mediaevalia, 25 (1964), pp. 171-8. He notes many of the correspondences we bring up here, but he goes rather too far when he interprets the passage in a strict allegorical fashion, for which there is little warrant in the text.

⁸⁵ See the entry for "hran" in F. Holthausen, Altenglisches Etymologisches Wörterbuch (Heidelberg: Winter, 1934), p. 172, and the entries for "hran" and "hranfisc" in Joseph Bosworth and T. Northcote Toller, An Anglo-Saxon Dictionary (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1898), p. 556. Bosworth and Toller cite several other examples of the use of hronfisc, although the only poetic use of the word is this one in Beowulf. See also T. Northcote Toller, An Anglo-Saxon Dictionary, Supplement (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1921), p. 563. For a different view, see W.G. Cooke, "'Hronas' and 'Hronfixas'," NQ, n.s. 18 (1971), 245-7.

five days of the swimming match,

op þæt unc flod todraf,
wado weallende, wedera cealdost,
nipende niht, ond norþanwind
heaðogrim ondhwearf; hreo wæron yþa (545b-48).

All of the images here associated with their being driven apart can be seen as symbolic. The "flod" and the "wado weallende" are merely a continuing expression for the sea of this life, ruled over by Satan, and this notion is extended by the expression "wedera cealdost," which is in exact opposition to the situation in the prelapsarian Eden, where the weather is mild, and there is no rain, yet the earth is still fruitful (Genesis A, 212-15). The hardness of the weather here indicates the state of fallen humanity, much as in The Wanderer and The Seafarer, and when Adam and Eve were cast out of the Garden of Eden, they also were beset with adverse weather (Genesis B, 807-13). The "nipende niht" of the Breca passage is similarly obvious in its implications, and darkness and night are often associated with Satan, in contrast to the light of Christian knowledge, shed from the sol iustitiae, which is Christ. God is the true light of the sun (Christ II, 696), and the Phoenix-poet states that good deeds shine like the sun (Phoenix, 598-601). The wind from the north represents, as it were, the "Christ-opposing Pneuma"--contrary to the winds of the Spirit--since the north, in patristic tradition, is most commonly associated with the devil,⁸⁶ and in Genesis A,

⁸⁶ For useful references on this topic, see Paul Salmon, "The Site of Lucifer's Throne," Anglia, 81 (1963), 118-23, Thomas D. Hill, "Some Remarks on 'The

32-4, Lucifer's throne is said to be in the north. We have already demonstrated the correlation between weather and spiritual condition in The Seafarer, and in that poem, it snows from the north (31b). All that is said in the first three lines of the above passage from Beowulf is then summed up in the expression "hreo waron ypa." The poet has started with the general statement "unc flod todraf," has explained its meaning in specific and metaphorical terms, and has returned to the more general statement, which we should by now understand. The reference to the terror of the waves is merely an abbreviated expression incorporating what has gone before.

The rising up of the sea, the "wado weallende," is paralleled by the action of the sea-inhabitants--"Wæs merefixa mod onhrered" (549)--who indicate, in the same way as does the storm, the Satanic power of the sea, and they are described as "laðum" (550a), just as Satan is "lað Gode" (Genesis B, 647) and is often described as "the hated one." Then Beowulf says,

þær me wið laðum licsyrce min
heard hondlocen helpe gefremede,
beadohrægl broden, on breostum læg,
golde gegyrwed (550-53a).

His "licsyrce" protects him from the evil "hated ones," and this is analogous to the lorica iustitiae of Ephesians. In the light of what has gone before, such a reading is certainly tenable, although we need not see Beowulf here as a strict allegorical representation of

Site of Lucifer's Throne'," Anglia, 87 (1969), 303-11, and Jung, Aion, pp. 98-101.

the miles Christi. The description of his licsyrce clearly indicates its value. In Germanic terms, one who possesses such a valuable piece of armor, "golde gegyrwed," must in some sense be a noble man, particularly if he owns it "on geogoðfeore." For the Christian, the armor of God is of inestimable value in defending oneself against the darts of the wicked and is much more valuable than any earthly thing "worked in gold," by which it might be represented in earthly terms for the perceptions of men. After the description of his licsyrce, one of the merelifa, a "fah feondscaða" (554a), draws him down to the sea-bottom, which is the diametric opposite to the Kingdom of Heaven and represents the furthest one can possibly be from God. Beowulf is, however, able to overcome this foe.

hwæpre me gyfeþe wearð,
 þæt ic aglæcan orde gerahte,
 hildebille; heaporæs fornam
 mihtig meredeor þurh mine hand (555b-58).

It is particularly significant that Beowulf speaks of his victory as having been "granted," and that it is not he himself who destroys the monster, but only the "battle-rush," acting "þurh mine hand." This is analogous to the Christian belief that the great actions in life are performed by God, with the saints as only the agents through which this is accomplished. Acting on this principle, for example, Judith rightly ascribes her victory over Holofernes to the power of the Lord (Judith, 341b-49). Beowulf does not specifically mention God here, but the sense is clear in the light of his state-

ment made before the fight with Grendel.

ond sibðan witig God
on swa hwæpere hond halig Dryhten
mæroðo deme, swa him gemet þince (685b-87).⁸⁷

As a proto-Christian initiate, it is "fitting" (561b) that he should overcome the "laðgeteonan" (559b) who oppress him. Their hellish associations are strengthened by the description of their feast, or anticipated feast, at the bottom of the sea.

Næs hie ðære fylle gefean hæfdon,
manfordædlan, þæt hie me begon,
symbol ymbseton sægrunde neah (562-64).

This is in contrast to the eschatological feast of which the saints will partake in the Heavenly City, as described both by St. Augustine and in the final portions of The Dream of the Rood. The eschatological feast will not be a literal surfeit,⁸⁸ and the contrast is one between the appetites of this world and the heavenly pleasures of the civitas Dei. By morning, Beowulf has killed all of the sea-monsters, that they may no longer trouble seafarers (565-69a), just as Christ has ensured us a safe passage through the sea of life, by his victorious battle with Satan. Then Beowulf says,

Leoht eastan com,
beorht beacen Godes, brimu swaþredon,
þæt ic sænæssas geseon mihte,
windige weallas (569b-72a).

⁸⁷ Note, in addition, Tacitus, Germania, ed. Henry Furneaux (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970), ch. 14, in which Tacitus states that it was considered the height of loyalty among the Germanic tribes to ascribe one's own heroic deeds to one's leader, and who is Beowulf's leader here, if not God? This is quite contrary to the superbia of which Unferð has accused him.

⁸⁸ De civitate Dei, xx, 7 (PL, 41, 667).

Literally, this refers to the rising of the sun, but Paradise was often held to be in the east, and that was the quarter from which Christ would come in the Parousia,⁸⁹ thus giving clear associations, not only of the literal sun, but of the metaphorical sol iustitiae. It is the "beorht beacen Godes," yet "beacen" means not only "beacon," but "sign" as well, and it is often used in Old English to describe the cross.⁹⁰ Since this immediately follows the description of his having slain the monsters, the point is a particularly strong one. Right after the sun comes up from the east, the sea subsides--"brimu swaþ-redon." We have already seen the metaphorical implications of Christ stilling the waters, and this is certainly a significant juxtaposition of the rising of the sun and the quietening of the sea. He is now able to discern the "sænæssas," and just as dawn brings sight, so does the light of Christ bring Christian understanding. Dawn was traditionally associated with deliverance, as in the following passage from the Old English Benedictine Office.

Crist is ealles mancynnes fultum and ealles middangeardes helpend. On dægred hit ge-wearð þæt þurh Godes mihte Moyses gelædde þæt Israhelitisce folc of Egipta lande eall unwemme ofer ða Readan Sæ, and æfter ðam

⁸⁹ As in Mt. 24:27. For further references, see Daniélou, The Bible and the Liturgy, p. 331 et passim.

⁹⁰ As in, for example, Dream of the Rood, 6, 21, 83, 118, and Elene, 92, 100, 162. For the cross as a Near Eastern sun symbol, see Franz Joseph Dölger, "Beiträge zur Geschichte des Kreuzzeichens, II," JAC, 2 (1959), pp. 24-8. The other articles in this series are JAC, 1 (1958), 5-19; 3 (1960), 5-16; 4 (1961), 5-17; 5 (1962), 5-22; 6 (1963), 7-34; 7 (1964), 5-38; 8/9 (1965/6), 7-52; and 10 (1967), 7-29.

sona seo sylfe sæ besencte and adrencte
Godes wiðerwinnan, Pharaonem and eall his
gegenge. And an dægred hit gewearð þæt
Crist of deape aras and of helle gelædde
ealle þa ðe he wolde, and his wiðerwinnan,
deofol sylfne, he besencte and eall his
gegenge on helle-susle. Þy we sculon on
dægred God georne herian...⁹¹

Gregory says of the dawn,

Aurora mens iusti est quae peccati sui
tenebras deserens ad lucem iam erumpit
aeternitatis,⁹²

and in psychoanalytic terms, the rescue of the hero at sunrise represents the triumph of consciousness, where water is the commonest symbol for the unconscious and the underwater battle of the hero represents the process of coming to consciousness. or attaining selfhood.⁹³

The conclusion which Beowulf draws from his having survived to see the rising sun, and thus the "sænæssas," is "Wyrd oft nereð unfægne eorl, þonne his ellen deah!" (572b-73). "Wyrd" here is not the cosmic necessity of Germanic paganism, but is rather a manifestation of the power of God, and B.J. Timmer has documented this usage of the term in his examination of the wyrd-passages in Old English.⁹⁴ Fate is subject to the Providence of God, as

⁹¹ James M. Ure, ed., The Benedictine Office: An Old English Text (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1957), p. 82. Cf. Exodus, 344b-46, where the sun comes up just as the Israelites enter the sea, and Christ and Satan, 463-7, where Christ is referred to as harrowing hell at dawn. Another example of deliverance at dawn is in the battle at Hrefnesholt (Beowulf, 2936-45). See also Solomon and Saturn, 215-19.

⁹² PL, 75, 1158. See also PL, 75, 648, and Eucherius, PL, 50, 741.

⁹³ Jung, Archetypes, pp. 18, 222, Symbols of Transformation, pp. 337, 348.

⁹⁴ B.J. Timmer, "Wyrd in Anglo-Saxon Prose and Poetry," Neophilologus, 26 (1941), 24-33, 213-28.

explicitly expressed, for example, in King Alfred's Boethius.

þios wandriende wyrd þe we wyrd hatað færð
æfter his forþonce and æfter his geþeahte,
swa swa he tiohhað þæt hit sie,⁹⁵

and God and fate are often cited in a parallel context, as in The Seafarer, 115b-16--"Wyrd biþ swiþre, meotud meahþigra þonne ænges monnes gehygd." Regarding this particular passage in Beowulf, Timmer points out that the hero, having mentioned God only two lines before, is hardly likely to be referring here to the pagan notion of fate.⁹⁶

After relating that he slew "niceras nigene" (575a), Beowulf tells of the superlative nature of his exploit.

No ic on niht gefrægn
under heofones hwealf heardran feohtan,
ne on egstreamum earmran mannon;
hwæþere ic fara feng feore gedigde
sipes werig (575b-79a).

This serves partly to re-emphasize to Unferð that he, Beowulf, is no coward, but the uniqueness of Beowulf's exploit parallels the uniqueness of Christ's sacrifice on the cross, and Christian saints, following Christ, are always superlative. The demon tells Juliana, who is continually associated with Christ, that no-one, including the Church Fathers, has ever been able to resist his wiles so well (Juliana, 510-15a), and Guthlac's fiends tell the saint that, apart from God himself, he has done them the

⁹⁵ Sedgefield, p. 128. This passage is also cited by Marie Padgett Hamilton, "The Religious Principle in Beowulf," PMLA, 61 (1946), p. 326. I have expanded the abbreviations used in Sedgefield.

⁹⁶ Timmer, p. 225.

most harm (Guthlac A, 205-07), to name two examples. After everything, Beowulf is "sipes werig," and this is quite similar to the depiction of Christ in The Dream of the Rood who, after his crucifixion, is described as "limwerigne" (63a). Christ was crucified but rose again, and through his sacrifice he purchased eternal life for men. So has Beowulf gone down into the sea of death and mortality and emerged to a new life, having slain the monsters who are harmful to "seafarers," and in the next three lines he recounts how the sea bore him to the shores of Finland (579b-81a). By now, Beowulf has proven himself to be a hero capable of slaying Grendel, and this is just a stage in his development, analogous to Christian baptism, and signifies his initiation into manhood/herohood. This deed is nothing to boast about (586b), and bigger struggles are yet to come, just as for the Christian, baptism is only the beginning of the struggle with Satan.

The sea, as we see here, represents not only evil, death, and opposition to God, but also regeneration and life. In Christian terms, the distinction is made as early as Gen. 1:6-8, in which the waters "sub firmamento" are distinguished from those "super firmamento." It is the former of these which Augustine sees as symbolizing the turbulence and sinfulness of human life, as we have discussed above, but of the latter he says,

Sunt aliae aquae super hoc firmamentum,
credo, immortales, et a terrena corrup-
tione secretae. Laudent nomen tuum, lau-
dent te supercoelestas populi Angelorum
tuorum, qui non opus habent suspicere

firmamentum hoc, et legendo cognoscere
verbum tuum.⁹⁷

It is the realm of the angels, far different from the realm of men. In primitive societies, waters precede every creation and represent the whole of potentiality, the source of all possible existence.

One of the paradigmatic images of creation is the island that suddenly manifests itself in the midst of the waves. On the otherhand, immersion in water signifies regression to the preformal, reincorporation into the undifferentiated mode of pre-existence. Emersion repeats the cosmogonic act of formal manifestation; immersion is equivalent to a dissolution of forms.⁹⁸

Water is the symbol of life; it is associated with semen and fertilizes all things; and contact with water always brings rebirth and regeneration. Rain is the creative power inherent in the sky and is associated with weather, crops, and the fruitfulness of the earth,⁹⁹ and the notion of the hierogamy of heaven and earth, producing all life, is a common one. This association of water and earth is implicit in Tacitus' description of the ceremonies in honor of the earth goddess among the ancient Germanic

⁹⁷ Confessiones, xiii, 15 (PL, 32, 852).

⁹⁸ Eliade, The Sacred and the Profane, p. 130. See also Patterns, pp. 188-94, Jung Aion, p. 200, and Jung and Kerényi, pp. 46-7, 67. As Jung and Kerényi put it (p. 47): "That all living things have come from the sea is a truth nobody will dispute who has occupied himself with natural history and philosophy."

⁹⁹ Eliade, Patterns, pp. 40, 78, and Sir James George Frazer, The Golden Bough: A Study in Magic and Religion, abr. (1922; rpt. New York: Macmillan, 1974), pp. 169-84. In Biblical tradition, God is the giver of rain and all fruitfulness, and this God-given rain is directly associated with the fecundity of the earth; see, for example, Dt. 11:11, Job 5:10, 38:26-7, Acts 14:17, Heb. 6:7.

tribes, after which, her chariot was purified in the waters of a secret lake.¹⁰⁰ Water functions as opening and closing cosmic cycles,¹⁰¹ and thus is made apparent the relationship of cosmogony and eschatology. Water is the chaos from which order is derived, and this movement from chaos to order is clear in the cosmology of Old English poetry. In The Wanderer and The Seafarer, the movement is exactly this--from chaos to order--in which the chaos and turbulence of life, as represented by the sea upon which the ^{personae} travel, is contrasted to the heavenly fæstnung, the archetype of order and stability. And this development in physical terms is only the objective correlative of the more meaningful development from modcearig to snottor on mode, which is the sole thing that makes the possession of the heavenly fæstnung literally possible. The darkness of ignorance, in which they initially dwell, yearning for the joys of the hall, is much the same as the darkness of the primordial chaos--as, for example, in Genesis--which is only offset by the divine creation of light, a figure of the perpetual light and stability embodied in the Heavenly City, for which men on earth must strive. The same cosmogonic/eschatological contrast of darkness and light is made on the individual level in the scene of Beowulf's adventure with Breca, where the hero transcends the darkness of boyhood and ignorance and emerges into the light of

¹⁰⁰ Tacitus, ch. 40.

¹⁰¹ Eliade, Patterns, p. 254.

maturity and knowledge, and again in The Dream of the Rood, where the Dreamer--"synnum fah, forwundod mid wommum" (13b-14a)--lies in darkness on the ground, while the Cross shines brightly "on lyft" (5a). But the story of the Cross, who started as a mere tree "holtes on ende" (29b), indicates the potential development open both to the Dreamer and to every penitential reader of the poem, and by the end of the poem, the Dreamer has come to Christian knowledge, hoping for admission to the heavenly fæstnung. The experience of the individual here is a reflection of the experience of all men and is a micro-cosmic expression of the forces at work in the universe at large. In a metaphoric sense, cosmogony is to earth as initiation--emergence into a state of harmony with the divine--is to man. This contrast of darkness and light, ignorance and wisdom, earthly chaos and divine harmony, is a common one, and one could cite many other examples.

In Christian baptism, the waters bring both death and new life--they are the death of the old man and the source of the new. The sea is the realm of the dead, but the dead one, although he has died to this life, is only embarking, as with Scyld (Beowulf, 50b-52), for a new and unknown realm. It is significant that Scyld's ship-burial is specifically compared with his coming forth over the waters as a child (43-6), which we have already spoken of as his "birth" into the heroic world. Satan, with whom we must struggle in the waters of baptism, in recapitulation of the battle originally lost by

Adam and then won again by Christ in the "sea of this world," represents death itself, with whom one must deal before one can obtain eternal life, and our victory is achieved through the efficacy of Christ's crucifixion, and by the Spirit of God coming down into the waters, as is prefigured in the very cosmogony.¹⁰² Nor is this latter a solely Christian idea, and Jung discusses the relation of the benedictio fontis to the alchemical aqua permanens.¹⁰³ The locus classicus for baptism as a process of death and rebirth, made efficacious through Christ, is Rom. 6:3-6.

An ignoratis quia quicumque baptizati sumus in Christo Iesu, in morte ipsius baptizati sumus? Consepulti enim sumus cum illo per baptismum in mortem: ut quomodo Christus surrexit a mortuis per gloriam Patris, ita et nos in novitate vitae ambulemus. Si enim complantati facti sumus similitudini mortis eius: simul et resurrectionis erimus. Hoc scientes, quia vetus homo noster simul crucifixus est, ut destruaturs corpus peccati, et ultra non serviamus peccato.

For Augustine, baptism is the conquering of death¹⁰⁴--once again, metaphorically related to the victory over Satan--and an image of the future resurrection.¹⁰⁵ Access to spirituality, as Eliade has demonstrated, is

¹⁰² See Gen. 1:2 and Bede's commentary on it, In Pentateuchum Commentarii, i, 1 (PL, 91, 193): "Hoc quoque quod dicit, Spiritus Dei superferebatur super aquas, figurat Spiritum sanctum descensurum super Christum de aqua baptismi in specie columbae." This same notion is reflected in the Old English Genesis A, 120, 127.

¹⁰³ Jung, Psychology and Religion, pp. 100-02.

¹⁰⁴ PL, 35, 2275.

¹⁰⁵ PL, 39, 2070.

always expressed, in archaic societies, in terms of such death and rebirth symbolism,¹⁰⁶ and this is what Maud Bodkin has referred to as the "Rebirth Archetype."¹⁰⁷ Just as the water can signify both death and regeneration, so does the serpent which resides in the water signify the duality of death and new life. Eliade discusses the fecundity associations of snakes, their association with the telluric mother, and the phallic implications of their form.¹⁰⁸ Christians express this duality in the contrast between Satan, the serpens antiquus (Apoc. 20:2), and Christ, the mystical fish, whose passion is prefigured in the serpens aereus erected by Moses in the wilderness (Jn. 3:14-15; cf. Num. 21:8-9), and as the Israelites were healed by the latter, so will all men be saved through the agency of the former. Rabanus Maurus demonstrates this duality when he interprets ^{the various serpents} that appear in scripture as Christus, incredulitas, diabolus, detractio, peccata, and daemones.¹⁰⁹ Jesus says, "Estote ergo prudentes sicut serpentes" (Mt. 10:16), and serpents are traditionally associated with wisdom.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁶ Eliade, Rites and Symbols of Initiation, pp. ix-xv.

¹⁰⁷ Bodkin, pp. 26-89.

¹⁰⁸ Eliade, Patterns, pp. 207-08.

¹⁰⁹ PL, 112, 1051CD. See also Hans Leisegang, "The Mystery of the Serpent," in Pagan and Christian Mysteries: Papers from the Eranos Yearbooks, ed. Joseph Campbell (New York: Harper, 1963), 3-69, and Karen Randolph Joines, Serpent Symbolism in the Old Testament: A Linguistic, Archaeological, and Literary Study (Haddonfield, New Jersey: Haddonfield House, 1974).

¹¹⁰ Jung, Aion, pp. 186, 245. For Augustine's interpretation of Jesus' words, see De doctrina, ii, 16, 24

What one gains in baptism is the potential for admission to the Heavenly Kingdom, and Paradise is often directly associated with the rite of baptism.¹¹¹ For St. Augustine, Paradise can be understood allegorically as the life of the blessed or figurally as the Church,¹¹² and the relation of both to baptism is clear--only those who are judged worthy can be baptized, and in the rite of baptism they gain admission to the Church. In baptism, one is cleansed from sin, and the Flood was usually held to be a figure of the destruction of the sinful world, realized in Christ.¹¹³ So also Augustine says of the Crossing of the Red Sea that the death of the Egyptians signifies the washing away of sins.¹¹⁴ Baptism is the Christian's participation in Christ's sacrifice and looks ahead to the Last Days, when Satan will finally be bound. It and its figures are particularly relevant to the state of fallen man, and the land of the Phoenix, which is a direct allegory of Paradise and the prelapsarian Eden, was, through God's mercy, unaffected by the Deluge (Phoenix, 41-6).

Baptism, then, is a strictly this-worldly phenomenon,

(PL, 34, 47). Cf. Bede, In Matthaei Evangelium Expositio, ii, 10 (PL, 92, 55CD).

¹¹¹ Daniélou discusses this association and cites the relevant references in From Shadows to Reality, pp. 22-9.

¹¹² De civitate Dei, xiii, 21 (PL, 41, 394-5); see also Ambrose, Hexameron, i, 10 (PL, 14, 155).

¹¹³ Daniélou, The Bible and the Liturgy, p. 5 et passim.

¹¹⁴ PL, 35, 1723. For the Crossing of the Red Sea as a figure of baptism, see above, p. 83n.

but one which looks toward another world. As such, it is often associated with martyrdom,¹¹⁵ another expression of the duality of death and life. Martyrdom need not mean literal death, but only such a deadness to the things of this world, that one would be ready at any moment to die for the faith, even if one is not literally called upon to do so. We have already discussed the renunciation of this world implied in the peregrinationes of the Wanderer and the Seafarer, and it is tempting to see their voyages, not only as metaphors for travel on the sea of life, but as specifically baptismal in nature. The Dream of the Rood, which is directly aimed at the conversion--and implicitly at the baptism--of the reader, contains the same theme of martyrdom as forerunner to eschatological glory, as John V. Fleming has well demonstrated.¹¹⁶ In primitive societies, the initiate is always "one who knows,"¹¹⁷ and the same is true in Christianity. Augustine draws the important distinction between those who are secundum hominem and those who are secundum Deum,¹¹⁸ and wisdom is one of the most important blessings conferred by baptism. Christ is the source of all wisdom and truth, and the saints of Old English poetry are always depicted as wise. Judith, for example, is "gleaw on geþonce" (Judith, 13b), and the Hebrews win their battle

¹¹⁵ Daniélou, The Bible and the Liturgy, p. 23.

¹¹⁶ Fleming, "The Dream of the Rood and Anglo-Saxon Monasticism," passim.

¹¹⁷ Eliade, The Sacred and the Profane, p. 189.

¹¹⁸ De civitate Dei, xv, 1 (PL, 41, 437).

over the Assyrians through her wise teaching (331-4). Andreas, similarly, is "gleawmod" (Andreas, 1579a), and the Wanderer, after he has come to a knowledge of the things of God, is "snottor on mode" (Wanderer, 111a).

The blessings of baptism are renewed in the Eucharist, which is the literal body and blood of Christ. Eliade notes that, in primitive religions, eating of the body of a god or animal is held to transfer the qualities of the thing partaken to the partaker, and he cites, inter alia, the well-known example from Hrólfs saga kraka, in which Hötttr partakes of the heart of a troll and is miraculously transformed from a cowardly kolbíttr into a great hero.¹¹⁹ So in Christian terms, whoever partakes of Christ's flesh, partakes also of his divine essence,¹²⁰ and as Christ's blood is in the Eucharist, so is it in his blood that we are baptized, as in Christ and Satan, 542-4. This refers to the blood and water which flowed from the side of Christ (Jn. 19:34) and which was interpreted in Christian tradition as the combination of the blood of redemption and the water of the spirit, from which together the Church was founded.¹²¹ To some extent, Christianity had adopted the notion of the regenerative power of blood from earlier culture, and blood, associated

¹¹⁹ Eliade, Rites and Symbols of Initiation, pp. 82-4.

¹²⁰ Ambrose, De sacramentis, vi, 1, 4 (PL, 16, 475A).

¹²¹ For references, see Hugo Rahner, "Flumina de Ventre Christi: Die patristische Auslegung von Joh. 7,37.38," Biblica, 22 (1941), p. 390 et passim. The blood of Christ was often held to represent his humanity, while the water represented his divinity (Ibid., pp. 372-3).

with the mother, played an important role in primitive initiation rites.¹²² In addition, Frazer has documented the primitive custom of the drawing of blood to obtain rain and the efficacy of the shedding of blood for the remission of sins.¹²³ We have already mentioned the cosmogonic associations of blood in Norse mythology, in which the earth and circumjacent sea were created from the body and blood of the slain giant Ymir.

The description of Beowulf's descent into the mere (Beowulf, 1422-1622) is a passage which brings together numerous of the diverse elements discussed above, and it is related to the Harrowing of Hell, Creation, the Deluge, and Baptism, as Allen Cabaniss has pointed out in his article on "Beowulf and the Liturgy,"¹²⁴ in which he relates this episode in Beowulf to the liturgy of baptism. This scene is parallel to that of the swimming match with Breca, but Beowulf is no longer a boy coming to manhood. Here he is the mature hero, making the world of Denmark safe and freeing it from evil, just as Christ did for mankind. Like Christ, or the Christian saint, Beowulf does not lament for his life (1442b), and at the


¹²² Eliade, Rites and Symbols of Initiation, pp. 26-9, 41.

¹²³ Frazer, pp. 74-6, 414. On the latter point, cf. 1 Jn. 1:7: "Si autem in luce ambulamus sicut et ipse est in luce...sanguis Iesu Christi, Filii eius, emundat nos ab omni peccato." See also Eph. 1:7, Col. 1:14, Heb. 9:22, 13:12, and Apoc. 1:5.

¹²⁴ Allen Cabaniss, "Beowulf and the Liturgy," JEGP, 54 (1955), 195-201. See also Nicholson, "Literal Meaning and Symbolic Structure," pp. 179-85.

conclusion of his speech to Hroðgar, it is said that he "eifste mid elne" (1493a), which is analogous to Christ hastening toward the cross, as in The Dream of the Rood, where the expression "eifstan elne mycle" (34a) is used. The descent of the mere and the fight itself have already been much discussed, and it is quite easy to interpret the monsters he encounters as the forces of evil, the breastplate he wears as the lorica iustitiae, and Beowulf himself as a miles Christi. Beowulf would certainly have been killed, had it not been for his armor, and the juxtaposition of this statement with the statement that God can easily bring about the right result, indicates the Christian nature of his panoply.

Hæfde ða fersiðod sunu Ecgþeowes
under gynne grund, Geata cempa,
nemne him heaðobyrne helpe gefremede,
herenet hearde,-- ond halig God
geweold wigsigor; witið Drihten,
rodera Rædend hit on ryht gesced
yðelice, syððan he eft astod (1550-56).

Then he sees the sword , and it is tempting to interpret it as the gladius spiritus, which is the word of God. The poet says of it that,

...hit was mare ðonne ænig mon oðer
to beadulace ætberan meahste (1560-61),

and this would indicate, not only the superiority of Beowulf to all other men, but also the difficulty of properly wielding the verbum Dei, which only Christ can understand in its full extent. In the midst of his slaying Grendel's mother, the light shines, as from heaven (1570-72a). This is once again a clear Christian signpost, and the rising of the sol iustitiae signals the regeneration

of life and the infusion of truth. After finally killing Grendel's mother, Beowulf comes up through the waters, of which the poet says, reminiscent of the aftermath to the fight with Grendel, "wæron yðgebland eal gefælsod" (1620; cf. 1176b)--the waters of the mere are purified, just as Christ has purified the sea of life--and Beowulf is now truly the "liðmanna helm" (1623b). The relation of all this to the Creation and Deluge is made clear in the story told on the hilt of the sword (1687-93), and the emblematic relationship is much the same as that between Baptism, Creation, and the Deluge in Christian doctrine. The descent of Grendel's mere is thus in some sense symbolically analogous to the process of Christian salvation, with Beowulf as the central active force.

The association with Christ is made, not only here, but at the end of the poem as well, and Charles Donahue points out the similarities between Beowulf's last days and Christ's--both, for example, go knowingly to their deaths, and the last speeches of each are filled with forgiveness--and he interprets Beowulf finally as a non-allegorical figura Christi.¹²⁵ So are Beowulf and Christ related in the passage regarding Beowulf's funeral (3137-74).¹²⁶ One striking similarity is the sympathy of nature

¹²⁵ Donahue, "Beowulf and Christian Tradition," pp. 114-16. Goldsmith, Mode and Meaning, pp. 241-4, challenges the view that Beowulf is a figura Christi.

¹²⁶ It is also possible to relate this episode to the burial of Skalla-Grímr in Egils saga, ch. 58, or to Svyatoslav's dream in the twelfth century Russian Slovo o polku Igoreve, ll. 393-410, although the scene in Beowulf is without the lightheartedness of the Icelandic or the mystery of the Russian. The editions of these works

at the death of the hero. In Beowulf,

wud(u)rec astah
sweart ofer swioðole, swogende leg
wope bewunden --windblond gelæg (3144b-46),

and the juxtaposition of the weeping and the cessation of the winds is analogous to the trembling of the earth at Christ's crucifixion (cf. Mt. 27:51-2; Mk. 15:33, 38; Lk. 23:44-5). In a like manner, "Heofon rece swe(a)lg" (3155b). Another comparison may be made between the woman who sings the dirge (3150-55a) and the women who stand about the cross in the New Testament. We have already discussed the use of the word "beacen" in reference to the cross, the cross being the "sign" by which men-- "seafarers"--must be guided, and on the site of the funeral pyre, the people build a mound, which is to serve as a "becn" (3160a), "(wæ)gliðendum wide g(e)syne" (3158), thus giving it a similar function. A bit later, the poet says,

Pa ymbe hlāw riōdam hildedeore,
æþelinga bearn, ealra twelfe,
woldon (care) cwiðan, [ond] kyning mænan,
wordgyd wrecan, ond ymb w(er) sprecaþ;
eahtodan eorlscipe ond his ellenweorc
duguðum demdon,-- swa hit gede(fe) bið,
þæt mon his winedryhten wordum herge,
ferhðum freoge, þonne he forð scile
of lichaman (læded) weorðan (3169-77).

Just as the twelve bearn æþelinga here extol Beowulf's heroic life and valorous deeds, so do the twelve Apostles

which I have consulted are Sigurður Nordal, ed., Egils saga Skalla-Grímssonar (Reykjavík: Íslenszk fornrit, 1933), and Vladimir Nabokov, trans., The Song of Igor's Campaign: An Epic of the Twelfth Century (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1961). On the relationship of the Slovo and Beowulf, see George J. Peredja, "Beowulf and Slovo o polku Igoreve: A Study of Parallels and Relations in Structure, Themes, and Imagery," Diss. Detroit 1974.

spread the story and teachings of Christ. Beowulf is also buried with a great deal of treasure (3163-5), and although there is no such element in the story of Christ, this indicates, in Germanic terms, the great nobility of the hero, especially if, as Leisi and Cherniss contend, treasure is the material symbol of human worth.¹²⁷ Beowulf is the most noble of the Geats, just as Christ is the most noble of mankind.

Structurally, this passage is related to the sea-passages in the poem, as marking yet another nodal point in the hero's development, in the progression starting in his swimming match with Breca, leading through his descent of the mere, and ending, at least for the purposes of the poem, here. It also presages a change in the fortunes of the Geats, as predicted by Wiglaf (2999-3007a), just as the voyage to Denmark and the fight with Grendel's mother are the forerunners to a change in the fortunes of the Danes. In addition, this passage is related to the ship-burial of Scyld at the beginning of the poem. The two funerals open and close the epic, and Scyld, the hero of old and eponymous founder of the race, is a prefiguration of Beowulf, the later and more central hero. Beowulf closes the era founded by Scyld, but he also opens a new era himself, in which, implicitly,

¹²⁷ Ernst Leisi, "Gold und Manneswert im Beowulf," Anglia, 71 (1953), 259-73, and Michael D. Cherniss, Ingeld and Christ: Heroic Concepts and Values in Old English Christian Poetry (The Hague: Mouton, 1972), pp. 79-101. But see also Patricia Silber, "Gold and its Significance in Beowulf," AM, 18 (1977), 5-19, who contends that the good effects of treasure are negated by its necessarily being acquired as plunder.

"seafarers" will have need of his "becn" on the headland. This is like Christ, who fulfills the Old Law and introduces the New, and the struggles which the Geats will certainly have to face are analogous to the necessary struggles of early Christianity. Scyld prefigures Beowulf, as the prophets of the Old Testament prefigure Christ, and various of the elements in his ship-burial foreshadow the Christ-like nature of Beowulf. Scyld's Christian, or proto-Christian, nature is established by the statement that he passed "on Frean wære" (27b), and when the poet tells us that his retainers placed him "be mæste" (36a), it is possible to see a reflection of the patristic tradition of the ship's mast as the cross of Christ.¹²⁸ Like Beowulf, he is buried with a great hoard of treasure, and this similarly establishes his nobility. It is possible to object that the specifically pagan nature of Scyld's ship-burial obviates the possibility of any such quasi-allegorical interpretation, but the ship-burial of Baldr¹²⁹ is no less pagan, and yet it is a critical commonplace to remark the connection between Baldr and Christ.¹³⁰

¹²⁸ Nicholson, "Literal Meaning and Symbolic Structure," pp. 186-8, notices this association. He goes too far, however, when he speaks of Scyld's funeral rites as being "an elaborate and impressive figura of Christian baptism" (p. 185). The episode does have baptismal elements and a broad initiatory function, but there is certainly not meant to be any direct one-to-one correspondence here between pagan rite and Christian ritual.

¹²⁹ Snorra Edda, p. 81.

¹³⁰ See, for instance, E.O.G. Turville-Petre, Myth and Religion of the North: The Religion of Ancient Scandinavia (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1964), pp. 106-25.

The relationship of Andreas to Beowulf has been much discussed,¹³¹ and Thomas Hill suggests the baptismal implications of the flood in Andreas, 1497-1606.¹³² He notices that it inevitably recalls Noah's flood, one of the most popular types of baptism in the Old Testament, and that the calling forth of the waters from the rock brings to mind Moses and the Rock of Horeb (Ex. 17:1-7). He mentions as well the relationship between the fourteen people destroyed in Andreas's flood, the evildoers destroyed in the time of Noah, the drowning of the Pharoah's host in the Red Sea, and the death of the "old Adam" in baptism. Here, as in Beowulf, the associations of the hero with Christ are quite clear. While he is still in prison, the blood he sheds (1405) is emblematically related to the blood of Christ, and he compares his suffering to that of the Savior (1406-15a), in the course of which he mentions that he is tormented for three days before coming out of the prison. Moses, Joshua, and Tobias, to whom Andreas refers (1511-16), were all Old Testament types of Christ,¹³³ and the waters from the

¹³¹ A useful article on this topic is Leonard J. Peters, "The Relationship of the Old English Andreas to Beowulf," PMLA, 66 (1951), 844-63.

¹³² Hill, "Figural Narrative in Andreas," passim. See also Constance B. Heatt, "The Harrowing of Mermedonia: Typological Patterns in the Old English 'Andreas'," NM, 77 (1976), 49-62, and Marie Michelle Walsh, "The Baptismal Flood in the Old English 'Andreas': Liturgical and Typological Depths," Traditio, 33 (1977), 137-58, both of whom follow Hill.

¹³³ For Moses as a type of Christ, see Ambrose, PL, 14, 319, Augustine, PL, 34, 743, Paulinus of Nola, PL, 61, 559, and Rabanus Maurus, PL, 108, 17-18, 84-6. For Joshua and Tobias as types of Christ, see Heatt, p.

Rock of Horeb, for instance, were analogous to the water and blood which flowed from the Savior's side, and from which were generated the Church and the waters of baptism.¹³⁴ The baptismal/initiatory significance of Andreas's sea journey is relevant here, since it foreshadows the general conversion which will follow upon the Apostle's arrival in Mermedonia, and his metaphorical baptism early in the poem prefigures that of other men, just as Christ's baptism in the Jordan was the necessary forerunner to the baptism of all men. Thus one can understand on the metaphoric level a passage which, on the literal level, would merely seem like a gratuitous display of God's power.

Hill makes a similar figural interpretation of Elene,¹³⁵ a poem about conversion, for which the inventio crucis is a metaphor.¹³⁶ Baptism is an important adjunct to conversion, and Hill claims that the post-conversion

50. Walsh, p. 141, points out that all three were traditionally associated with baptism.

¹³⁴ Ambrose, De sacramentis, v, 1, 3 (PL, 16, 465-6).

¹³⁵ Thomas D. Hill, "Sapiental Structure and Figural Narrative in the Old English Elene," Traditio, 27 (1971), 159-77. He is followed and much expanded upon by Varda Fish, "Theme and Pattern in Cynewulf's Elene," NM, 76 (1975), 1-25.

¹³⁶ See Robert Stepsis and Richard Rand, "Contrast and Conversion in Cynewulf's Elene," NM, 70 (1969), 273-82. Daniel G. Calder, "Strife, Revelation, and Conversion: The Thematic Structure of Elene," ESudies, 53 (1972), 201-10, sees conversion as only one of the themes of the poem, and Ellen F. Wright, "Cynewulf's Elene and the 'Sinzal Sacu'," NM, 76 (1975), 538-49, contends that the poem deals not only with conversion, but with the difficulty of converting. For the view that the main theme of the poem is the conflict of Christian and heroic ideals, see John Gardner, "Cynewulf's Elene: Sources and Structure," Neophilologus, 54 (1970), 65-76.

confrontation between Judas and the devil is patterned on the renunciation of the devil in the baptismal liturgy.¹³⁷ We have already mentioned the relation of the Old English Exodus to the baptismal liturgy, and it is a poem of conversion and regeneration, developed through the implied imagery of baptism. One of the main themes of the poem, as Farrell and Lucas contend, is the covenant between God and the Israelites,¹³⁸ in which case, it is possible to see the "digressions" about Noah and Abraham as thematically integral parts of the poem. The Israelites keep their covenant with the Lord, but the Egyptians break their implied covenant with the Israelites, for which a bi-partite judgement is meted out in the Crossing of the Red Sea--the Israelites cross safely to the other side, while the Egyptians are drowned.¹³⁹

This constitutes another aspect of baptism which we have not yet mentioned--baptism as judgement. As in the Deluge, it is both a punishment and a forgiveness, and in just the same fashion, the Red Sea is a judgement from which the Israelites are preserved.¹⁴⁰ The flood is a

¹³⁷ Hill, "Sapiental Structure," pp. 174-5. Regan, "Cynewulf's Elene," p. 50, shares the same view, and in addition she contends (p. 33) that Elene's instruction to Judas parallels the catechesis for baptism.

¹³⁸ Robert T. Farrell, "A Reading of OE. Exodus," RES, n.s. 20 (1969), p. 410, and Peter J. Lucas, "The Cloud in the Interpretation of the Old English Exodus," EStudies, 51 (1970), p. 299.

¹³⁹ For a fuller discussion of the Exodus, see below, pp. 155-66.

¹⁴⁰ Daniélou discusses this tradition in The Bible and the Liturgy, pp. 73-93, and in From Shadows to Reality, pp. 75-7.

type, not only of baptism, but of the Last Judgement--of the new deluge at the end of time. This flood-baptism-judgement relationship is clear in Old English. The drowning of the fourteen people in Andreas, who are referred to as "ða wyrrestan, faa folcsceaðan" (1592b-93a), is such a judgement. This is in contrast to the raising up of the ones who had formerly died in the flood (1613-24), which is accomplished through the direct intervention of God, and to their baptism immediately following (1630). Then Andreas bids that a church be built

pær sio geogoð aras
purh fæder fulwiht ond se flod onsprang
(1634b-35).

The geogoð has risen up "purh fæder fulwiht," and there can be no doubt as to the implications of the passage. In Juliana, as well, Eleusius and his companions go down to their death in the sea. They,

heane mid hlaford, hropra bidæled,
hyhta lease helle sohton (681-2),

and this also constitutes a judgement.¹⁴¹ One should note the implication here of the bottom of the sea as the locus of hell, a fitting place for Eleusius, who is continually associated with Satan in the poem.

In Judith, there are similar associations of drowning and death, rendered specifically as a judgement. At Holofernes' feast, he and his retainers are "drencte mid wine" (29b) and are lying about "swylce hie wæron deaðe

¹⁴¹ See also the drowning of the Huns in Elene, 136b-37a, and the death by drowning of the evil Quintianus in Walter W. Skeat, ed., Elfric's Lives of the Saints (London: 1881-1900), I, p. 208.

geslegene, agotene goda gehwylces" (31b-32a). Their being "drowned with wine" as though they were dead is analogous to the drowning of the Egyptians in the Red Sea, and indeed, foreshadows their own approaching death.¹⁴² Holofernes' drunken stupor permits Judith to kill him, and the Assyrians, having to "cast off sleep" (247), are unable to make any effective resistance against the Hebrew attack. When Judith slays Holofernes, as he is "drencte mid wine," his soul goes straight to hell, just as is the case with Eleusius and his companions.

Læg se fula leap
gesne beæftan, gæst ellor hwearf
under neowelne næs ond ðær genyðerad was,
susle gesæled syððan æfre,
wyrnum bewunden, witum gebunden,
hearde gehæfted in hellebryne
æfter hinsiðe (111b-17a).

One must notice here the infernal associations of going "under neowelne næs." Grendel's mere, to which Beowulf travels over "neowle næssas, nicorhusa fela" (Beowulf, 1411), is "under næssa genipu" (1360a), and in Guthlac A, for instance, the doors of hell are "niþer under næssas" (563a).¹⁴³ The relationship between the "drowning" of the Assyrians and the Crossing of the Red Sea is made

¹⁴² Bernard F. Huppé, The Web of Words: Structural Analyses of the Old English Poems *Vainglory*, *The Wonder of Creation*, *The Dream of the Rood*, and *Judith* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1970), p. 161. An interesting analogue to this occurs in Vergil's description of the Greeks' nocturnal approach to Troy (Aeneid, ii, 265): "invadunt urbem somno vinoque sepultam."

¹⁴³ Cf. Beowulf, 1358b, 1427, Christ and Satan, 134a, Elene, 831, and Blickling Homilies, pp. 209-11. For the relation of stone-cliffs to misery, see The Wife's Lament, 47b-50a.

clear in the Vulgate account, in the narration of the events which take place prior to the opening of the Old English poem. Achior, recounting some of the highlights of Jewish history (Judith 5:5-25), mentions both the parting of the Red Sea and the bitter waters being made sweet. Both of these miraculous events occur as the result of keeping God's covenant, and as long as the Hebrews continue to do so, they will continue to prosper. The Assyrians, who oppose them, have no chance of success and are "drowned," just as were the Egyptians. In addition, the Vulgate recounts that Holofernes, in laying siege, had the aqueduct to Bethulia cut off (7:6) and that he placed guards around the neighboring springs (7:10), and this emblematically represents an antagonism to the baptismal waters in which the Hebrews prototypically bathe.

Clearly related here is the "sleep" of Holofernes and his myrmidons. They are similar to the five foolish virgins, who sleep when they should be watching, and are types of the sinful men who will be surprised at the Parousia. In the Vulgate account, by contrast, the Hebrews pray to the Lord "per totam noctem" (6:20). The Hebrews, as the proto-Christian "filii lucis," must not sleep (1 Thess. 5:5-6), but the Assyrians, over whose feasting night draws (34a), dwell in the ignorance of which this incipient darkness is the objective correlative. Sleep in the poem is directly related to death, and the former of these inevitably leads to the latter.¹⁴⁴

¹⁴⁴ For the commonplace association of sleep with

Analogously, the monsters in the Breca episode of Beowulf are "sweordum aswefede" (567a), and in the Old English Exodus, it is said of the drowned Egyptians that they "swæfon" (496b). The death-bringing depredations of the Grendel clan take place while men sleep, and it is only the waking hero who is victorious. The death which overtakes the Assyrians, however, is not only physical death, but it is the second or "spiritual" death as well, and they are deprived of cosmic joy, just as they are "weagesiðas" on earth. The poet makes this clear in the scene of Holofernes' soul departing for hell (111b-21), and hell is the place for those who are divorced from God. The Assyrians of Judith are not "eos qui dormierunt per Iesum" (1 Thess. 4:13), which the Hebrews, on the other hand, will implicitly become. To the Assyrians, death brings separation from the presence of God, but to the Hebrews it will bring unity with God in eternal joy.

Both sleep and death are characterized by the implicit absence of the soul from the body, as is the case with the shape-shifters of Old Norse literature. Kveld-Úlfr, for example, received his nickname because every evening he used to slumber in his chair so deeply that no-one could wake him, and that was because his soul was roaming the hills in the form of a wolf.¹⁴⁵ We have al-

death, see Eph. 5:14 and the Old English Solomon and Saturn, 313b, where Saturn says, "slæp bið deaðe gelicost." For classical references to this tradition, see Robert J. Menner, ed., The Poetical Dialogues of Solomon and Saturn (London: Oxford University Press, 1941), p. 131, Ninck, p. 65n., Klaeber, "Die christlichen Elemente," pp. 465-7, and Eliade, Myth and Reality, pp. 126-32.

¹⁴⁵ Egils saga, ch. 1. Cf. Óðinn's similar propensi-

ready mentioned the theme of mens absentia cogitans in Old English,¹⁴⁶ and if one thinks of this mental-spiritual wandering as analogous to the death which must necessarily precede resurrection and regeneration--much as one dies in the waters of baptism and is reborn a new man--it is possible to go even further in the interpretation of The Seafarer than we have done already. The Seafarer tells of the travels of his mind "ofer hwæles eþel" (58-66a) and concludes,

	Forþon me hatran sind
dryhtnes dreamas	þonne þis deade lif,
lære on londe	(64b-66a).

The mental activity he describes--metaphorically representing death--is followed by a realization of true Christian values, and thus becomes a microcosmic expression for the Christian life. It recapitulates the death of Christ and his resurrection, the baptism which commemorates it, and eschatologically, the death and resurrection of every penitent Christian. This interpretation is reinforced by the fact that such activity takes place on the sea, the baptismal associations of which we have already made clear. Relevant here is the patristic treatment of the somnus Adae. Eve is born from the side of

ties, as described in Ynglinga saga, ch. 7. For the general association of shape-shifting with water, see Ninck, pp. 138-80, who contends, inter alia, that shape-shifting demons are most often water-spirits and that the state of sleeping/dreaming is directly analogous to that of being in or on the water, "das traumhafte Element" (p. 174). For all references to the sagas in Heimskringla, I have consulted Snorri Sturluson, Heimskringla, ed. Bjarni Aðalbjarnarson, 3 vols. (Reykjavík: Íslensk fornrit, 1951).

¹⁴⁶ See above, pp. 71-2.

Adam, just as the Church is born from the side of Christ, and both are related to "the Church giving birth to a Christian in the waters of Baptism."¹⁴⁷

Holofernes' sleep, however, is induced by drink, and "evil drink" is associated in Old English with the evil sea, the final resting place for such as Eleusius and his comrades. In Guthlac B, death is referred to as "þone bitran drync," which Eve prepared for Adam in the beginning (868b, 980-2), just as the flood in Andreas is described as a "biter beorþegu" (1533a).¹⁴⁸ Holofernes partakes of the ebrietas by which a fool is allured (Prov. 20:1), resulting in his death, and in Old English, drink, the Fall, death, and foolishness are all related. The poet of the Old English Daniel similarly relates that the Israelites prospered

oðþæt hie wlenco anwod æt winþege
deofoldædum, druncne geðohtas (17-18),

and in the Laws of Ethelred, over-eating and over-drinking are included among the list of evil actions to be shunned.¹⁴⁹ In Genesis A, both Noah and Lot, when intoxicated, are referred to as having a "narrowed mind" (1570, 2604-05). After Adam and Eve are expelled from the Garden of Eden, they suffer both hunger and thirst (Genesis B, 802), and

¹⁴⁷ Daniélou, From Shadows to Reality, p. 49.

¹⁴⁸ Concerning this theme of the bitter drink of death, see Albert S. Cook, "Bitter Beer-Drinking," MLN, 40 (1925), 285-8, Carleton Brown, "Poculum Mortis in Old English," Speculum, 15 (1940), 389-99, and G.V. Smithers, "Five Notes on Old English Texts," English and Germanic Studies, 4 (1951/2), pp. 67-74, and Schwab, passim.

¹⁴⁹ Liebermann, Gesetze, I, p. 242. On the evil connotations of drinking, see also Mt. 26:39 and Apoc. 14:10.

this is a metaphor for their desire to return to God, just as it is the desire of fallen man to transcend the second death. Relevant here are both Jesus' teaching in the Sermon on the Mount that "Beati qui esuriunt et sitiunt iustitiam: quoniam ipsi saturabuntur" (Mt. 5:6) and Peter's comparison of evil men to "fontes sine aqua" (2 Pet. 2:17).

This is all in contrast to the potus spiritalis which is Christ (1 Cor. 10:4; cf. Jn. 7:37-8, Apoc. 22:1, 17), who is the drink, not of death, but of eternal life (Jn. 4:14). St. Augustine talks of the sobria ebrietas of which one partakes at the fountain of the Lord,¹⁵⁰ and this is much different from Holofernian intoxication. In Jerome, the aquae vivae of Jn. 7:38 are the doctrina Salvatoris,¹⁵¹ which one can drink in the four-part stream of the Evangelists. One comes to eternal life by drinking the waters of Scripture, which contain the teachings of Christ. Wine is traditionally associated with wisdom, youth, and everlasting life,¹⁵² and in Norse mythology, for example, wisdom and understanding flow from Mímisbrunnr.¹⁵³ The duality of wine-drinking here is intimately tied up with the wider duality

¹⁵⁰ Confessiones, v, 13; ix, 3 (PL, 32, 717, 765-6). Cf. Ambrose, De sacramentis, v, 3, 17 (PL, 16, 469B).

¹⁵¹ Commentarii in Zachariam, III, xiv, 8 (PL, 25, 1528C). Rahner, "Flumina de Ventre Christi," p. 293, cites this and other references.

¹⁵² Eliade, Patterns, p. 285 et passim.

¹⁵³ Snorra Edda, p. 28. It is also no doubt significant here that Óðinn, the "wise one" of Norse mythology, consumes nothing but wine, as in Grímnismál, 19.

of water and water symbolism. In classical times, oracles were commonly situated near the sea, rivers, or sacred springs, and there is a close connection between water, prophecy, and the gaining of knowledge.¹⁵⁴ Ninck documents the notion of poets and seers gaining inspiration from fountains,¹⁵⁵ and in 4 Esdras 14:39-45, the prophet Esdras writes ninety-four prophetic books in forty days after drinking the cup of understanding. So in the Ecclesiastical History does Bede refer to the "scientiae salutaris...flumina,"¹⁵⁶ and speaking of the preaching of Bishops Germanus and Lupus in Britain, he says, "antistites venerandi, torrentes eloquii sui cum apostolicis et evangelicis imbribus profuderunt."¹⁵⁷ Water is the element upon which the Wanderer and the Seafarer gain knowledge, and the drinking of water or wine and passing over it have equivalent emblematic meanings. Wine-drinking is both life and death bringing and the concomitant of both knowledge and ignorance. For the Christian, the waters of the spirit must come through the Church, and the body of Christ, from which the streams of Jn. 7:38 flow, must be interpreted both as his literal body and as the Church, which is his mystical body.¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁴ Ninck, pp. 47-99.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid., pp. 90-4. Cf. also the Norse notion of the mead of poetry, as in Hávamál, 104-10.

¹⁵⁶ Historia Ecclesiastica, iv, 2 (PL, 95, 174A).

¹⁵⁷ Ibid., i, 17 (PL, 95, 47B). See also ll. 4-8 of the verse in v, 7 (PL, 95, 237AB).

¹⁵⁸ Augustine, De civitate Dei, xxii, 18 (PL, 41, 779-80).

The water which flows from the side of Christ, and out of which the Church is founded, is related to both baptism and the Eucharist, and Christ says of the Eucharistic wine, "Hic est sanguis meus novi testamenti, qui pro multis effundetur" (Mk. 14:24). So, eschatologically, will the Lamb lead the righteous "ad vitae fontes aquarum" (Apoc. 7:17), and we have here an image which encompasses all the various aspects of Christian experience, from poculum mortis in the Garden of Eden to the drink of the faithful in Paradise.

The streams of Jn. 7:37-38 were also held to flow, not from Christ, but from the sides of the faithful,¹⁵⁹ as in Augustine: "Ergo facta sunt flumina currentia de ventre discipulorum, cum acceperunt Spiritum sanctum."¹⁶⁰ Whoever drinks of the potus spiritalis will become a fountain for others. Thus the Wanderer, the Seafarer, and the Dreamer in The Dream of the Rood pass on to us the knowledge they have gained. This sort of situation is particularly noticeable in the last of these three poems, where the Cross gains knowledge through his relationship with Christ and then comes to convert the Dreamer and in turn yet others, through the vehicle of the Dreamer. Implicitly, if the Dreamer converts us, we are similarly obligated to spread his teaching to others. One both receives the outpouring of the fons Christi and becomes a fons oneself. Drinking of the aquae vivae

¹⁵⁹ See Rahner, "Flumina de Ventre Christi," pp. 367-408.

¹⁶⁰ Enarrationes in Psalmos, xcii, 7 (PL, 37, 1188).

satisfies the thirst of the soul, and clearly the upright and the wicked thirst in different ways.

An important adjunct to the theme of drinking is that of feasting, and this has the same duality of meaning.¹⁶¹ Augustine, citing Ps. 68:23-4, speaks of feasting as a trap and a retribution,¹⁶² which is in contrast to the eschatological banquet (cf. Lk. 14:15, 22:29-30; Apoc. 19:9), of which those will partake who, rather than feasting on earth, wait for the Second Coming, and banqueting in this sense indicates membership in the populus Dei. Catherine A. Regan, in her interpretation of Elene, draws the connection between Judas' seven-day fast (691-708) and the seven-day penitential fast imposed on the primitive catechumen prior to his baptism. She rightly finds it significant that Judas' hunger is referred to four times in ten lines and claims that his fast not only serves as a punishment but that it is also a metaphorical expression indicating his subconscious yearning for the truth and is a necessary step in his spiritual develop-

¹⁶¹ On the relationship of food and drink metaphors to one another in Old English generally, see Schwab, pp. 32, 82-9, who points out the connection between the poculum mortis and the forbidden fruit in Paradise. She cites the tradition of the forbidden fruit as being grapes, as well as that of Christ as grapes hung on the cross, thus drawing yet another connection between the Fall and the Crucifixion, and turning the blood and water shed from Christ's side into wine, as sacramentally reflected in the Eucharist.

¹⁶² De civitate Dei, xvii, 19; xviii, 46 (PL, 41, 553-4, 608). John F. Vickrey, "Exodus and the Herba Humilis," Traditio, 31 (1975), pp. 36-7, discusses the adverse connotations of "devouring" in patristic tradition, in which the devil is characterized as greedily gulping things down. On the notion of fasting on earth being followed by feasting in heaven, see the two Old English Soul and Body poems.

ment.¹⁶³ She relates this to the mental hunger of the Seafarer and could also have cited the postlapsarian hunger of Adam and Eve. This passage is structurally and linguistically related to Judas' earlier reply to Elene.

Hu mæg þam geweorðan þe on westenne
meðe ond meteleas morland trydeð,
hungre gehæfted, ond him hlaf ond stan
on gesihðe bu samod geweorðað,
streac ond hnesce, þæt he þone stan nime
wið hungres hleo, hlafes ne gime,
gewende to wædle, ond þa wiste wiðsæce,
beteran wiðhyccge, þonne he bega beneah? (611-18),

and this speech, as E. Gordon Whatley points out,¹⁶⁴ is an ironic and unconscious reference to Christ's words in the New Testament (Mt. 7:9; Lk. 9:11). When Judas initially chooses the harder course, metaphorically represented by the stone, he indicates his spiritually backward condition. The Eucharist is a type of the eschatological feast, which comes as the result of fasting on earth. It is the eating of the "panis vitae" (Jn. 6:48-57), which is Christ, and elsewhere in the New Testament, Christ is referred to as both the "esca spiritalis" (1 Cor. 10:3) and the "manna absconditum" (Apoc. 2:17).

This is paradigmatically stated in the miracle of the loaves and the fishes (Mt. 14:14-21, 15:32-9; Mk. 6:34-44, 8:1-9; Lk. 9:10-17; Jn. 6:1-15), in which Christ feeds the multitude. Bede interprets this miracle as a sign that the faithful will be saved from their long spiritual fasting when they finally come to rest with the

¹⁶³ Regan, "Cynewulf's Elene," pp. 43-4.

¹⁶⁴ E. Gordon Whatley, "Bread and Stone: Cynewulf's Elene 611-618," NM, 76 (1975), pp. 553, 558-9.

sol iustitiae and states that the multitude of five thousand indicate the future partakers of the eschatological feast.¹⁶⁵ Christ's calling of the Apostles indicates that through them our hearts must daily be fed.¹⁶⁶ Christ does not wish to send the people away hungry, and this may be understood allegorically to mean that he does not wish to send away the sinners of this life without the food of spiritual doctrine, since it is impossible to go through this world unscathed without having the word of the Savior as one's aliment.¹⁶⁷ Augustine interprets the two fish of this miracle as kingly and priestly power, which are united in Christ,¹⁶⁸ and this is emblematically related to the notion of Christ as the mystical fish. In Jewish eschatology, the fish was associated with the coming of the Messiah and was held to be the food of the blessed in Paradise,¹⁶⁹ and so was Christ also, in fish form, held to be the nourishment of the faithful.¹⁷⁰ The Old Testament types of this episode are the miracle of the manna and the quails (Ex. 16, Num. 11) and the food

¹⁶⁵ In Marci Evangelium Expositio, ii, 6 (PL, 92, 192), and In Joannis Evangelium Expositio, 6 (PL, 92, 707).

¹⁶⁶ In Marci Evangelium Expositio, ii, 6 (PL, 92, 192).

¹⁶⁷ Ibid., ii, 8 (PL, 92, 205-06).

¹⁶⁸ De diversis quaestionibus, lxi, 2 (PL, 40, 48); cited in Jung, Aion, p. 147.

¹⁶⁹ See Scheftelowitz, "Das Fisch-Symbol," pp. 6-12, 18-40, 321-43. We have already cited (p. 80n. above) the belief that in the Last Days, the Leviathan will be killed by the angel Gabriel and his flesh eaten in banquet by the righteous.

¹⁷⁰ Augustine, Confessiones, xiii, 21, 29 (PL, 32, 857); cited in Jung, Aion, p. 113.

miracles of Elijah and Elisha (1 Kg. 17:2-16, 19:4-8; 2 Kg. 4:1-7, 42-4), but just as Christ is far greater than they, so is his miracle the greater,¹⁷¹ and one must distinguish, as does Christ, between earthly and divine food, of which theirs is the former and his is the latter.

Patres vestri manducaverunt manna in deserto, et mortui sunt. Hic est panis de caelo descendens: ut si quis ex ipso manducaverit, non moriatur (Jn. 6:49-50).

St. Augustine, referring to Jn. 6:51, says that "to eat bread" in the New Testament is the sacrifice of Christians--"ideo hic dixit, manducare panem; quod est in novo Testamento sacrificium Christianorum"¹⁷²--and this interpretation no doubt underlies the theme of the "tasting" of death in The Dream of the Rood. The statement "Deað he þær byrigde" (101a) can refer to either Adam or Christ in the poem, and it looks forward to the demand which will be made of all men in the Last Days.

Ne mæg þær ænig unforht wesian
for þam worde þe se wealdend cwyð.
Frineð he for þære mænige hwær se man sie,
se ðe for dryhtnes naman deaðes wolde
biteres onbyrgan, swa he ær on ðam beame dyde
(Dream of the Rood, 110-14).

Expressed in the metaphor of drinking, this is much like the question Christ asks his Apostles:

¹⁷¹ For a discussion of this point, see Alkuin Heising, "Exegese und Theologie der alt- und neutestamentlichen Speisewunder," ZKT, 86 (1964), 80-96. He also notes that Christ's miracle is both a figure of the Eucharist and "ein Symbol der eschatologischen Erfüllung der Gemeinschaft Christi mit seinen Gläubigen in Frieden und Liebe und gesättigtem Gottverlangen" (p. 96).

¹⁷² De civitate Dei, xvii, 5 (PL, 41, 536).

potestis bibere calicem, quem ego bibo:
aut baptismo, quo ego baptizor, bapti-
zati? (Mk. 10:38)

Once again, we have the notion of martyrdom as willingness to die for the faith, and those who "taste death"--who drink the same cup as Christ--are those who will partake of the eschatological banquet (Dream of the Rood, 140-1). Holofernes' feast is quite a different matter. He and his Assyrians do not partake of the esca spiritalis, but rather of the fleshly surfeit which has no relation to the feast of the saints.¹⁷³ This distinction between earthly and heavenly feasting is made in the Vulgate account of the story of Judith, in which there is also a feast among the Hebrews (Judith 6:19-20). Here, the orderliness of divine feasting is reflected; before it, they are "adorantes Dominum" (6:14), and afterwards, they hold a night-long vigil to pray for the Lord's aid. The wickedness of Holofernes and his myrmidons in their earthly riot is counterpointed by this picture of the Hebrews, the righteous proto-Christians.

The same contrast is made in Andreas. The Mermedonians intend to eat Andreas and Matthew (1072-75a), but their expectations are denied, and the poet says of them,

Nyston beteran ræd,
ponne hie þa belidenan him to lifnere
deade gefeormedon (1088b-90a).

This is an earthly surfeit of the lowest order. God, on the other hand, is "sawla symbelgifa" (1417a)--the "feast-giver of souls." We have already mentioned the feast-

¹⁷³ On the typological function of gula in the Fall of Man, see Schwab, pp. 97-102.

expectations of the monsters in the Breca episode of Beowulf (562-4), and the same is said of Grendel.

 þa his mod ahlog;
mynte þæt he gedælde, ær þon dæg cwome,
atol aglæca anra gehwylces
lif wið lice, þa him alumpen wæs
wistfylle wen (730b-34a).

Such literal feasting is always associated with the doers of evil--with those who are secundum hominem--and it is quite foreign to the purposes and inclinations of the Christian saint.

Thus we see the broad associative range of the images discussed in this chapter. The sea and those things relating to it are both destroying and creating, and this duality is resolved in the contrast of heaven and earth, of things spiritual and those pertaining only to this life. This is most forcefully expressed in the mystery of the Incarnation--the combination of the human and the divine in the person of Christ--which is the central duality of Christian thought and which indicates our own potential. We travel now on the bitter sea of life, but it is in expectation of dwelling eternally in the presence of God. All parts of Christian cosmology are implied in the sea-images used by the Anglo-Saxon poet, and the thrust is essentially eschatological. What is earthly only looks forward to what is heavenly, and it is from this association that earthly things derive their meaning.

Chapter Three

The Eschatology of the Cross

Water is the source of all potential, but men on earth must be concerned with the actual. While the God of the Old Testament may inseminate, it is the vegetative result which is most important, and such earthly vegetation is the mundane reflection of the surer fixity of Paradise. Thus in Eden, although the earth is still fruitful, it never rains (Genesis A, 212-15), and the Land of the Phoenix is unaffected by the Deluge (Phoenix, 41-6). The Deluge, analogously to the inseminating rain, was the source of rebirth and regeneration and is typologically related to Christian baptism, yet, like baptism, it is a strictly earthly phenomenon, and the celestial Eden and the Land of the Phoenix exist on a different ontological plane altogether. In Christian terms, it is from the cross that the waters of baptism flowed, just as the waters flowed from the rock in the desert (Num. 20:7-11)--the rock which is Christ--and it is the cross which is the necessary catalyst, or as Ambrose puts it, "Quis est enim aqua sine cruce Christi? Elementum commune, sine ullo sacramenti effectum."¹ So is it only

¹ Ambrose, De mysteriis, iv, 20 (PL, 16, 411BC). Cited in Rahner, "The Christian Mystery," p. 203. So in the Aeneid is "salvation" effected by means of the golden bough, with which the hero is able to undergo his transformation and "rebirth" into the second half of the poem, depicted in the mediating symbolism of his journey to the underworld, where past and present meet and are re-

through Moses' rod--one of the commonest Old Testament types of the cross, as Moses himself is one of the commonest types of Christ--that the water is caused to spring forth from the rock or that the waters of Marah (Ex. 15:23-5) are made sweet, and Augustine goes so far as to say that the double striking of the rock indicates the two arms of the cross.²

Just as the cross is the necessary agent in baptism, so is the ark the necessary agent in the salvation of Noah, and the ark and the cross are often typologically related.³ Similarly for Scyld, for Beowulf, and for Andreas, it is not only significant that they are on the sea, but also that they are in their respective ships, without which passage over the sea, whether or not we wish to view it as the metaphorical sea of life, would not be possible. In the elegies, the sea separates and is the source of one's difficulties--on the sea there is "bitre breostceare" and "cearselda fela" (Seafarer, 4a, 5b), and it divides both the Wanderer and the Seafarer from the hall-joys they once knew--and the Wanderer and the Seafarer are only able to bridge the gap by means of an ocean-going vessel, which brings them, not to the

solved. Here the golden bough is the earthly "type," if you will, of the green and happy groves of Elysium, to which it provides admission.

² Augustine, PL, 35, 1612; cited in Daniélou, The Bible and the Liturgy, p. 151. The efficacy of dipping the wood in the water is paralleled in the modern folkloristic practice of dipping the cross in water to obtain rain by sympathetic magic (cf. Frazer, p. 88).

³ Cf. Augustine, PL, 40, 334.

paltry joys of land-dwellers, but to the heavenly homeland. In The Husband's Message, The Wife's Lament, and Wulf and Eadwacer, there is no such vehicle, and the respective separations remain unresolved.

The cross is both catalyst and source of stability amidst the flux and mere potentiality of sea-like existence, but before applying this notion extensively to the corpus of Old English poetry, it is perhaps well to examine certain other expressions of this metaphor, that we may better understand the full range of meanings implied in any given occurrence of it. In the pages following, we will consider the symbolic implications of trees and vegetation generally, especially as they relate to the eschatology of the cross, the history of the cross-symbol itself, and the metaphor of the ship of the Church, after which we will examine the Old English Exodus, Elene, and The Dream of the Rood, three poems which are heavily influenced by the widespread medieval speculations on the cross in its various forms. The worship of trees and plants is found everywhere and is certainly of great antiquity, and the religious ideas invoked invariably relate to the themes of death, rebirth, and resurrection, paralleling the vegetative cycle. It is a commonplace to remark the religious value of nature, and the apprehension of the supernatural in the phenomena of the natural world is widespread. The complexity of experience in this world implies the existence of a God or gods, and Freud and others see the notion of deity as a mere harmonization of the forces of

hostile nature.⁴ Nor are trees and vegetation simply the symbols of numinous force, but they are thoroughly permeated with life themselves and are often the home of nymphs and demons of various descriptions. As such, they are directly related to fertility and have often been held to influence prosperity and the growth of crops.⁵

Tree-gods and sacred groves were a commonplace of classical antiquity. In the Aeneid, for example, Dido has a temple built to Juno in the midst of a sacred grove (i, 441-52), and in Latium there stands a grove "religione patrum late sacer" (viii, 598). James notes that Old Testament theophanies commonly take place by springs and sacred trees, for which he cites, inter alia, Gen. 16:14, Gen. 21:33, and Judges 4:5.⁶ The second of these examples is directly reflected in the Old English Genesis A, where Abraham establishes a grove in Beersheba for the purposes of sacrificing to God.

Ðær se halga heahsteap reced,
burh timbrede and bearo sette,
weobedd worhte, and his waldende
on þam glædstede gild onsægde,
lac geneahe, þam þe lif forgeaf,
gesæliglic swegle under (2840-45).

Tacitus describes, as well, how the ancient Germans consecrated woods and groves and how they worshipped the

⁴ Sigmund Freud, "Die Zukunft einer Illusion," in Gesammelte Werke: Werke aus den Jahren 1925-1931 (London: Imago Publishing Co., 1948), pp. 535-42. See also Paul Radin, Primitive Religion: Its Nature and Origin (1937; rpt. New York: Dover, 1957).

⁵ See Eliade, Patterns, p. 306, and Frazer, p. 398. James, The Tree of Life, pp. 42-4, describes the fertility uses of trees and notes the phallic implications of their form.

⁶ James, The Tree of Life, p. 19.

earth-goddess in such a place.⁷ The mistletoe, such as that used in the killing of Baldr (cf. Völuspá, 31-3), is commonly associated with the golden bough of classical mythology, combining in itself both the divine and the chthonic, rooted in the earth, yet incarnating in its golden color the sun's fire, from which all vegetation and fertility come,⁸ and the highest expression of the northern tree-cultus is Yggdrasil, the world-ash. In terms of Christian legend, Bede, citing Adamnan's Book of Holy Places, mentions the grotto in Bethlehem where Christ was supposed to have been born,⁹ and this event would confer upon such a place the highest degree of sanctity.

A more concrete expression of tree-worship in Christianity renders itself in the notion of the cross as tree, and it is certain that the Christian mysteries originated in the vegetation and fertility cults of classical antiquity, although they were in no way dependent upon them.¹⁰ Firmicius Maternus specifically relates the cross to the bough of the ancient mysteries and shows the correct use of the symbol in Christianity, as opposed to the errors of paganism.¹¹ As the golden bough reflects

⁷ Tacitus, Germania, chs. 9, 39, 40, 43. For more on Germanic tree cults, see Jan de Vries, Altgermanische Religionsgeschichte, vol. 1 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1956), pp. 350ff.

⁸ Frazer, pp. 815-23.

⁹ Bede, Historia Ecclesiastica, v, 16 (PL, 95, 256C).

¹⁰ Rahner, Greek Myths, pp. 18ff., and "The Christian Mystery," passim. Tracing this development is the informing principle of all Rahner's work.

¹¹ De errore profanorum religionum, 28 (PL, 12, 1040-43); cited in Rahner, "The Christian Mystery," p. 183.

in its color the fire of the sun, from which all vegetation and fertility come, so is the cross a participant in the solar epiphany, by its association with Christ, the sol invictus, from whom all blessings flow. Eschatologically, the cross will shine in the heavens in place of the sun as a sign of the Last Days, for which we have, inter alia, the witness of the Old English Christ III:

ðonne sio reade rod ofer ealle
swegle scineð on þære sunnan gyld (1101-02).¹²

In the Vulgate, the cross is frequently referred to as a lignum (cf. Acts 5:30, 10:39, 13:29; 1 Pet. 2:24), and in the Greek version, xúlon is used interchangeably to indicate either cross or tree.¹³ In the Fathers as well, the cross is very commonly referred to as either arbor or lignum. Thus, the tree of life in Genesis becomes a type for the cross, as does the lignum vitae planted by the water in Psalm 1:3, along with virtually every other mention of wood in the Old Testament.¹⁴ In the Old English Elene, the cross is specifically referred to as a great leaf-covered tree:

 hie weorðeden
mode ond mægene þone mæran dæg,
heortan gehigdum, in ðamsio halige rod
gemeted wæs, mærost beama

¹² Cook, in his edition of the poem, pp. 193-4, cites Pseudo-Augustine, Sermo 155 (PL, 39, 2051) as a source for this. For references to the Greek Fathers, see W. Bousset, "Platons Weltseele und das Kreuz Christi," ZNTW, 14 (1913), p. 284.

¹³ T.C.G. Thornton, "Trees, Gibbets, and Crosses," JTS, n.s. 23 (1972), 130-1.

¹⁴ Cf. Augustine, Enarrationes in Psalmos, i, 3 (PL, 36, 67-8).

para þe of eorðan up aweoxe,
geloden under leafum (1221b-26a),

and in The Dream of the Rood, the cross narrates its history, starting from when it was a tree "holtes on ende" (Dream of the Rood, 29b).¹⁵

In archetypal terms, cross and tree are analogous in their mere form, and as Eliade notes, verticality alone is enough to evoke transcendence,¹⁶ but the further correspondence between cultic belief and Christian is striking enough to require mentioning. As trees were often used in fertility rites, so also was the cross commonly invoked to induce fertility. An Anglo-Saxon example of this is the metrical charm For Unfruitful Land, in which the cross is invoked side by side with the Earth-mother and the Blessed Virgin. Not only are trees associated with fertility, but with healing as well, and Mannhardt, among others, documents their efficacy in the curing of disease.¹⁷ Disease was commonly held to be caused by evil demons who dwelt within the trees, so only by supplicating the trees was one able to convince such demons to cease their malicious attacks. In Christian terms, the

¹⁵ For other legends of the cross before Christ, see Richard Morris, ed., Legends of the Holy Rood; Symbols of the Passion and Cross-Poems, EETS 46 (London: Trübner, 1871), Arthur S. Napier, ed., History of the Holy Rood-tree, EETS 103 (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner, 1894), and N.R. Ker, "An Eleventh Century Old English Legend of the Cross before Christ," ME, 9 (1940), 84-5. For the Icelandic versions of the legend, see Mariane Overgaard, ed., The History of the Cross-Tree down to Christ's Passion: Icelandic Legend Versions (Copenhagen: Munksgaard, 1968).

¹⁶ Eliade, The Sacred and the Profane, p. 129.

¹⁷ Wilhelm Mannhardt, Wald- und Feldkulte (Berlin: Gebrüder Borntraeger, 1875-7), II, pp. 12-25 et passim.

tree of life, typologically related to the cross, is the prototype of all healing and miraculous plants, and to Christians, medicinal herbs owed their efficacy to having first been found on Calvary.¹⁸ William O. Stevens notes the use of the cross as a cure for disease in Anglo-Saxon times and mentions its prominent place in disease charms.¹⁹ Healing by the power of the cross, as in Elene, 876-93, somewhat removed from its anthropological context, becomes a paradigm for the efficacy of the crucifixion. As the dead man in Elene is brought to life by the wood of the true cross, so does Christ rescue us all from the death of the spirit. He is the "Medicina vulnerum nostrorum,"²⁰ and "our wounds" are metaphorically understood as the wounds of sin. As disease was generally held to be caused by the malicious assaults of demons, which were thus parried by the invocation of the cross, so was the sign of the cross held sufficient, more generally, to repel the attacks of the devil and evil spirits. The Christian, in baptism, was implicitly marked with the

¹⁸ Eliade, Patterns, pp. 292-8.

¹⁹ William O. Stevens, The Cross in the Life and Literature of the Anglo-Saxons, Yale Studies in English 23 (New York: Henry Holt, 1904), pp. 30-1. For further references on the cross as a cure for disease, see Dölger, "Beiträge," VI, pp. 32-4, and VII, pp. 5-12. In Acta Joannis 9, cited by G.Q. Reijners, The Terminology of the Holy Cross in Early Christian Literature as based upon Old Testament Typology, Graecitas Christianorum Primaeva 2 (Nijmegen: Dekker and van de Vogt, 1965), p. 177, John makes the sign of the cross over a goblet of poison, thereby rendering it harmless, and Dölger, "Beiträge," VII, p. 9, cites a similar story by John Moschos about Julian, Bishop of Bostra (PG, 87, 3, 2953A).

²⁰ Augustine, Confessiones, ix, 13, 35 (PL, 32, 778).

sign of the cross, and it was by this that he was enabled to overcome the demon in the baptismal pool.²¹ So Bede, in his Epistle to Bishop Egbert, says that laymen must constantly be fortified with the sign of the cross against the wiles of unclean spirits,²² and in Andreas, the Apostle vanquishes the evildoers by the sign of the cross.

Siððan hie oncneowon Cristes rode
on his mægwlite, mære tacen,
wurdon hie ða acle on þam onfenge,
forhte, afærde, ond on fleam numen.
(Andreas, 1337-40).²³

A related concept is that of the cross as tropaion, or sign of victory, and by using the cross as a battle-standard, one could thereby insure success in battle. Constantine, for example, conquers through the sign of the cross, and Guthlac also, before his battle with the demons, raises up the cross as an aid (Guthlac A 179-80). So does Bede relate that King Oswald set up a cross before his battle with the heathen and that later, many miracles were performed at the site of this cross.²⁴ This is all analogous to the old Germanic practice, described by Tacitus, of carrying into battle images and signs brought from the sacred groves,²⁵ and in Old Norse, two notable victories of Christians--those implicitly marked with the sign of the cross--over pagans occur at

²¹ Cf. Daniélou, The Bible and the Liturgy, pp. 60-1.

²² Epistolae, ii (PL, 94, 665D).

²³ Cf. Blickling Homilies, p. 243, and further references in Dölger, "Beiträge," VI, pp. 7-18.

²⁴ Historia Ecclesiastica, iii, 2 (PL, 95, 117C).

²⁵ Germania, ch. 7.

the Battles of Vínheiðr and Clontarf.²⁶ A common Old Testament example of victory through the sign of the cross is that brought by Moses standing with his arms outstretched (Ex. 17:9-12), and this was usually held to be a type of Christ on the cross.²⁷

An important ramification of all this tree/nature/cross imagery is the notion of trees as related to men, and this generally manifests itself in one of two ways-- in the parallelism between the life of the plant or tree and the life of man, growing, withering, dying, and growing again, and in the analogy through similarity of form. The first of these is quite fully discussed by Mannhardt, who cites many classical examples of this correspondence and notes, inter alia, both the tradition of planting a tree when a child is born and that of the sacred trees, which, if anyone cuts, he wounds himself.²⁸ Further examples are not hard to find, and James cites the olive tree of classical mythology, analogous to the tree of life, with the fortunes of which the life of Athena was intimately bound.²⁹ Similarly, in the Aeneid (iii, 19-46), the myrtle growing on the grave of Poly-

²⁶ Egils saga, ch. 52, Njáls saga, ch. 157. The edition of Njáls saga I have consulted is Einar Ól. Sveinsson, ed., Brennu-Njáls saga (Reykjavík: Íslensk fornrit, 1954).

²⁷ Cf. Augustine, De trinitate, iv, 15, 20 (PL, 42, 901). For the patristic notion of cross as tropaion, particularly in relation to the theme of the ship of the Church, see Hugo Rahner, "Antenna Crucis IV: Das Kreuz als Mastbaum und Antenne," ZKT, 75 (1953), pp. 145-55.

²⁸ Mannhardt, II, pp. 25, 28, 295, et passim.

²⁹ James, The Tree of Life, pp. 192-3.

dorus visibly represents the life of the man buried underneath. When Aeneas tries to pull it up, drops of black blood trickle from it, and finally a voice from the tumulus bids him desist, starting its speech with the words, "Quid miserum, Aenea, laceras?" (iii, 41). So is the tree in the Old Testament dream of Nebuchadnezzar (Dan. 4) analogous to the king himself (see especially vv. 20-22), and this is duly reflected in the Old English Daniel, 495-592. On the social level, Mannhardt cites the example of the welfare of a tree as related to the fortunes of the Roman state,³⁰ and Aeneas is referred to as "Romanae stirpis origo" (xii, 166). The German anthropologist also discusses the association of man-form and tree-form,³¹ and an interesting New Testament parallel is provided by the story of Christ's healing the blind man in Mark 8:22-6. The healing takes place in two stages, and before the man is completely healed, he says, "Video homines velut arbores ambulantes," upon which Bede, aside from making the relevant allegorical interpretation, remarks,

certe in luce nocturna solent apparere,
ita ut non facile arbor an homo sit possit
dignosci.³²

In addition, men are often held to be descended from trees,³³ and in the prose Edda, Snorri gives a list of

³⁰ Mannhardt, II, pp. 25-6.

³¹ Ibid., I, pp. 12-26.

³² In Marci Evangelium Expositio, ii, 8 (PL, 92, 211D).

³³ Cf. Aeneid, viii, 315, and Snorra Edda, p. 37. For further examples, see Jung, Symbols of Transformation, pp. 219, 233, 246.

tree-names which are used as mannaheiti.³⁴

The logical extension of all this is to refer to the earth as either a field or a vineyard (cf. Mk. 12:1-9; Lk. 10:2), and in the Fathers, world and Church conflate as the ager Dei.³⁵ Man thus becomes the agricultura Dei (1 Cor. 3:9; cf. Ps. 79:9), and the people who come to hear Christ are the messis (Mt. 9:36-8; Lk. 10:2), so that the eschatological separation of the good and evil can be expressed in the same agricultural metaphor.

et purgabit aream suam, et congregavit
triticum in horreum suum, paleas autem
comburet igni inextinguibili (Lk. 3:17).

Bede adopts a similar metaphor in the Ecclesiastical History, where, referring to Bishop Felix, he says,

Nec vota ipsius in cassum cecidere; quia
potius fructum in ea multiplicem creden-
tium populorum pius agri spiritualis cultor
invenit.³⁶

By the fourteenth century, therefore, it is hardly surprising to find the world referred to as a "felde ful of folke."³⁷ Proceeding from this, Christ becomes the high-

³⁴ Snorra Edda, pp. 179-81. See also Helgakviða Hundingsbana I, 9, and Helgakviða Hundingsbana II, 38.

³⁵ For the identity of terra and Ecclesia, see Gregory, PL, 76, 26, 117, 482; PL, 79, 626; Alcuin, PL, 101, 1267; and Rabanus Maurus, PL, 112, 1065. For Ecclesia as ager Dei, see Augustine, PL, 34, 926; PL, 37, 1744; PL, 38, 46; Gregory, PL, 75, 1150; and Rabanus Maurus, PL, 112, 856. For Ecclesia as hortus, see Rabanus Maurus, PL, 111, 530, and for God as agricola noster, see Augustine, PL, 36, 804, Paulinus of Nola, PL, 61, 366, and Rabanus Maurus, PL, 112, 855.

³⁶ Historia Ecclesiastica, 11, 15 (PL, 95, 108A).

³⁷ Piers Plowman, Prol., 17. The edition I have consulted is W.W. Skeat, ed., Langland's Vision of Piers the Plowman, EETS 38 (1869, rpt. London: Oxford University Press, 1972).

est expression of the identity of man and tree. He is represented as the central tree in the field-of-the-world/field-of-the-Church, and the passage from John 15 (1-12), beginning "Ego sum vitis vera, et Pater meus agricola est," is well known. He is the tree and we are the branches, and the whole allegory expresses the central Christian concept that no man can be fruitful except in Christ, the author of eternal life. Similarly, he is the "primitiae dormientum" (1 Cor. 15:20), and the forthcoming resurrection is seen as a harvest, of which Christ is the surety, as the first sheaf presented to God in the Old Testament was the pledge of the coming harvest (cf. Lev. 23:10-11). In the Fathers, it is quite commonplace to find Christ referred to as a tree,³⁸ and Gregory compares him to the great tree which grows from a grain of mustard seed in Mt. 13:31.

Ipse quippe est granum sinapis qui in horti sepultura plantatus, arbor magna surrexit. Granum namque fuit cum moreretur, arbor cum resurgeret. Granum per humilitatem carnis, arbor per potentiam majestatis.³⁹

Christ is also referred to as the lignum vitae in Ambrose, Augustine, Bede, and Rabanus Maurus.⁴⁰ Thus Christ, in his tree-like nature, is analogous to the arbor dominicae passionis, and both Christ and the cross, in various con-

³⁸ Cf. Cassiodorus, PL, 70, 990; Gregory, PL, 79, 486, 495; and Rabanus Maurus, PL, 112, 865.

³⁹ Moralia in Job, xix, 1, 3 (PL, 76, 97A).

⁴⁰ Ambrose, De Isaac, v, 43 (PL, 14, 542); Augustine, De civitate Dei, xx, 26 (PL, 41, 701); Bede, Hexameron, i (PL, 91, 44); Rabanus Maurus, Allegoriae (PL, 112, 985C).

texts, are the co-extensive authors of salvation.

The cross as Christian symbol of salvation is clearly related to all such tree and vegetation imagery, and many of their symbolic implications coincide.⁴¹ The seasonal drama is of fundamental importance in all such symbolism, and the vine is, cross-culturally, the vegetal symbol of immortality.⁴² The tree of life is commonly associated with the cult of the dead, and hope for resurrection is often expressed by the burial of grain with the dead.⁴³ Similarly, the vine-scrolls in the synagogue at Dura-Europos are held to express the hope for individual salvation.⁴⁴ The vine-scroll early becomes the common possession of all Christendom, referring to Christ as the true vine, and it is often found on grave monuments as a statement of Christian hopes for the hereafter.⁴⁵ A related iconographic symbol, also found on grave stones, is that of the palm tree. Robert J. Menner notes that in the ancient East the palm was used as a symbol of life and fertility, and he cites numerous pat-

⁴¹ The "uncertainty" associated with the widespread meanings of both cross and tree is explainable in Jungian terms by the fact that they are libido symbols and not allegories of any particular concrete object (cf. Jung, Symbols of Transformation, p. 222).

⁴² Eliade, Patterns, p. 285.

⁴³ James, The Tree of Life, pp. 201ff., 234.

⁴⁴ Bickerman, "Symbolism in the Dura Synagogue," p. 144.

⁴⁵ Ernst Kitzinger, "Anglo-Saxon Vine-Scroll Ornament," Antiquity, 10 (1936), pp. 61ff., and W.G. Collingwood, Northumbrian Crosses of the Pre-Norman Age (London: Faber and Oliver, 1927), pp. 38-9. Collingwood also notes (p. 39) the relationship of the vine to the tree of life.

ristic references for the palm as sign of victory, especially over death.⁴⁶ A further expression of this symbolism is that of the cross as sign, and Erich Dinkler, in his article on the history of the cross symbol, discusses the Jewish use of the sign of the cross for sacral purposes and for ritual stigmatization, referring to the Mark of Cain, to the marking of the door-posts with the blood of the paschal lamb, and to the oft cited Ezekiel 9:4.⁴⁷ In Jewish terms, the cross is the sign of Yahweh and indicates his ownership, the eschatological implications of which are plain. Those houses marked with the blood of the paschal lamb were passed over by the destroying angel, and the cross is a common symbol on Jewish grave monuments, as an indication of hopes for eternity.⁴⁸ The cross marked on the tomb indicates that the person buried there is a faithful adherent of Yahweh and is "owned" by him, on account of which the buried one will be exempted from the Last Judgement and able to enter directly into heavenly bliss. In Genesis 17:9-14 (cf. Genesis A, 2312-16), God commands Abraham to institute

⁴⁶ Menner, Solomon and Saturn, pp. 43-4. On palm-twigs as a sign of victory, see also Blickling Homilies, p. 67: "þa bæron hie him togeanes blowende palmtwigu; forþon þe hit wæs Iudisc þeaw, þonne heora ciningas hæfdon sige geworht on heora feondum, & hie wæron eft ham hweorfende, þonne eodan hie him togeanes mid blowendum palmtwigum, heora siges to wyorþmyndum." Cf. Ibid., p. 149, and Apoc. 7:9.

⁴⁷ Erich Dinkler, "Zur Geschichte des Kreuzsymbols," ZTK, 48 (1951), 148-72.

⁴⁸ Ibid., p. 168; cf. Georg Stuhlfauth, "Das Schiff als Symbol der altchristlichen Kunst," Rivista di Archeologia Cristiana, 19 (1942), p. 129.

the practice of circumcision as a signum or token of adherence to the covenant they had established between them, and this is a common Old Testament type for the marking with the cross which in Christian times comes to indicate what is no longer possession by Yahweh, but possession by Christ.⁴⁹ Similarly, the signing with the tau in Ezekiel 9:4 was commonly held to be a figure of salvation on the cross, and the liberation of the Jews in the Passover was held to foreshadow the liberation of the whole world through the efficacy of Christ's crucifixion and resurrection.⁵⁰ The Christian practice of signing with the cross was widespread, and in St. Augustine, for example, this signatio is a spiritual sign for the separation of the good and evil.⁵¹ Thus in the Exodus, the Israelites, or those who are implicitly marked with the sign of Yahweh, are permitted to cross the Red Sea, while the Egyptians are drowned. One can find the eschatological expression of this principle in the Old English Christ III, where the righteous are marked with a sign and are thus set apart from the unrighteous.

forþon þær to teonum þa tacen geseoð
orgeatu on gode, ungesælge,
þonne Crist siteð on his cynestole (l214-16).

⁴⁹ See Daniélou, The Bible and the Liturgy, pp. 63-7. For circumcision as a type of baptism, see also Augustine, PL, 44, 833.

⁵⁰ For references, see Hugo Rahner, "Antenna Crucis V: Das mystische Tau," ZKT, 75 (1953), p. 394. Cf. Bede, Historia Ecclesiastica, v, 21 (PL, 95, 276D-77A).

⁵¹ Augustine, PL, 42, 1135AB. See Rahner, "Das mystische Tau," pp. 395-6, 408. On the cross-sign as separating Christians from all other men, see also Dölger, "Beiträge," IV, p. 11.

As we have seen, the cross-sign was made over catechumens as part of the baptismal ceremony, thus marking them as belonging to Christ and enabling them thereby to overcome Satan in the pool of baptism. An analogous practice is that of applying the prima signatio to those who are unable or as yet unwilling to be baptized, an example of which occurs in Egils saga, where Egill and his brother Þórólfr agree to be thus marked by King Æthelstan before the Battle of Vinheiðr, because the Christian king was unwilling to have any heathens fight in his army.⁵²

Whatever the expression of this ritual practice, the result is salvation and victory over the forces of evil and death. In Anglo-Saxon England, as elsewhere, it was customary to make the sign of the cross over a dying man as a mark of hope,⁵³ a practice which is analogous to the use of the cross on Jewish grave monuments, and one finds a further expression of this theme in Resignation, where the speaker says,

Getacna me, tungla hyrde,
þær selast sy sawle minre
to gemearcenne meotudes willan,
þæt ic þe geþeo þinga gehwylce,
ond on me sylfum, soðfæst cyning,
ræd arære (10-15a).

The persona is concerned with the gaining of salvation, and if God "marks" him as he bids--for this is the secondary signification of "getacna"--his sal-

⁵² Egils saga, ch. 50. See also Nordal's note on this passage, p. 129.

⁵³ Stevens, p. 30. For further information on the practice of making the cross-sign before death, see Dölger, "Beiträge," VIII, pp. 30-31.

vation is secured, and this sign, whether literally or metaphorically applied, is the sign of the cross. This is particularly significant in relation to the overall vegetative matrix of the poem, and the cross as eschatological symbol is emblematically equivalent to the tree of life in Paradise. Lee points out that here, as in the other elegies, "images of vegetation symbolize the redemptive power of God,"⁵⁴ and given the correspondence between external conditions and state of mind in the Anglo-Saxon elegies, this invocation of the cross indicates, by its relation to the other imagery in the poem, the potential happiness which will come to the speaker. In psychoanalytic terms as well, the cross is a symbol of wholeness,⁵⁵ so signing with the cross must implicitly, once again, bring happiness. A negative example of the use of such a sign is the "tacen" (Genesis B, 774a) which Satan uses for the purposes of deceiving Eve. Adoption of this token brings only death, and it is not analogous to the tree of life, but instead to the "tree of evil" produced by Cain's slaughter of Abel (Genesis A, 987-1001). The internalization of such an evil sign occurs when Adam eats of the forbidden fruit, and sorrow is the result. When confronted by God, Adam says,

Me ða blæda on hand bryd gesealde,
 freolucu fæmne, freadrihten min,
 ðe ic þe on teonan gepah. Nu ic þæs tacen wege
 sweotol on me selfum. Wat ic sorga ðy ma
 (Genesis A, 883-6).

⁵⁴ Lee, Guest-Hall, p. 148.

⁵⁵ Jung, Aion, p. 224.

This is quite different from the peace and certainty of salvation which come when we accept Christ into our hearts. Sorrow is the necessary concomitant to postlapsarian mortality and can only be transcended, as with the Wanderer and the Seafarer, by adherence to the things of God.

Related to the iconography and eschatology of the cross is the image of the ship, particularly as the ship of the Church. Ships, like the cross, are associated with trees, and xulon, the word used interchangeably in the New Testament for both tree and cross, was often used in classical times as a synecdoche for "ship."⁵⁶ In the Old Testament, the author of Sapiientia refers to Noah's ark in the phrase, "Benedictum est enim lignum per quod fit iustitia" (Sap. 14:7), and Irenaeus draws the analogy between Noah's ark and the tree of paradise.⁵⁷ In the list of skipskeningar in Snorra Edda, a ship is referred to as the "skíð sækonunga,"⁵⁸ and in Old English, a ship can be metaphorically described as, among other things, brimwudu (cf. Elene, 244b; Guthlac B, 1331b),

⁵⁶ Hugo Rahner, "Antenna Crucis III: Das Schiff aus Holz," ZKT, 67 (1943), p. 6. See also Aeneid, ix, 80-92, and x, 230, in the latter of which places, Aeneas's ships are referred to figuratively as "pinus Idaeae." On the relation of ship and tree in Egyptian religion, see Jung, Symbols of Transformation, pp. 246-7.

⁵⁷ Adversus haereses, iv, 36, 4. Cited in Rahner, "Antenna Crucis VII: Die Arche Noe als Schiff des Heils," ZKT, 86 (1964), p. 158. Rahner also says, referring to Adv. haer., v, 16, 3, and v, 17, 4, that "Die Arche ist, gleichwie der Baum des Paradieses, das Sinnbild für den Fall und die Erlösung des Adamgeschlechtes durch die Kraft des Holzes" (p. 158).

⁵⁸ Snorra Edda, p. 192.

flodwudu (Christ II, 853a), sawudu (Beowulf, 226a), or sundwudu (Beowulf, 208a, 1906b), all of which are analogous to the Old Norse expression sætréum, or "sea-trees," as in Reginismál, 17.

Ships, like the trees to which they are related, have various religious and magical associations, and ship symbols were centrally important in the cults of Marduk, Isis, and Dionysus.⁵⁹ Stuhlfauth also notes that "das Schiff war dem damaligen Rom und der damaligen Welt allgemein glückbringendes Zeichen,"⁶⁰ completely divorced from the cult of Isis, by which it was popularized. So among the Greeks were the profits of a sea-voyage, in conjunction with the fate of the tree planted by the sea-shore as an offering to the maritime gods, held to be the source of national well-being.⁶¹ In Bronze Age rock carvings of the North Germanic area, ships are often depicted surmounted with trees or solar discs,⁶² and the notion of the voyage of the sun in a boat over the ocean of heaven is commonplace, by which means, ships are directly associated with the life-giving powers of the sun.

⁵⁹ For the most general statement of this, see W.H.R. Rivers, "Ships and Boats," in Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, ed. James Hastings (Edinburgh: Clark, 1920), XI, 471-4. See also Kurt Goldammer, "Das Schiff der Kirche: Ein antiker Symbolbegriff aus der politischen Metaphorik in eschatologischer und ekklesiologischer Umdeutung," Theologische Zeitschrift, 6 (1950), p. 233, and Stuhlfauth, p. III.

⁶⁰ Stuhlfauth, p. 131. So also was the cross a Near Eastern luck-symbol (cf. Dölger, "Beiträge," II, p. 22).

⁶¹ Mannhardt, II, p. 29.

⁶² Turville-Petre, p. 5. See also de Vries, I, pp. 105ff.

The ship cutting through the waves becomes an easily understood metaphor for ploughing, and the use of ships in fertility rites has been widely noted.⁶³ So in Norse mythology is Nóatún, which means harbor, the home of the earth-goddess Njörðr,⁶⁴ thus associating once again sea-voyage and its termination with fertility, vegetation, and prosperity. A corollary to this association is found in the use of the ship as a sepulchral symbol, in which it is often seen sailing to the right--that is, to the East, or in the direction of Paradise.⁶⁵ Death is a sea-voyage, and whatever the cultural context, such sea-voyages embody one's hope for the hereafter, with their final goal being the harbor of the heavenly homeland. Sea-voyage is the catalyst for human change and development, and Alvin A. Lee points out in this connection "the importance in Old English poetry of the boat as a symbol of the way heroic man takes part in reenacting the divine acts of Creation and redemption"⁶⁶ and goes on to cite the examples we have already discussed in our last chapter.

The mast, often fashioned out of a single tree,

⁶³ Turville-Petre, p. 173; de Vries, I, pp. 105ff. For ship-processions having to do with fertility, see also E.K. Chambers, The Mediaeval Stage, vol. 1 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1903), p. 121. For the association of ploughing with the cross, see Pseudo-Augustine, PL, 40, 688: "Ecce agnosce, Christi cruce exararis, quando eius signo in fronte signaris;" cited in Dölger, "Beiträge," IV, p. 13.

⁶⁴ Grímnismál, 16.

⁶⁵ Stuhlfauth, pp. 129, 132.

⁶⁶ Lee, Guest-Hall, p. 199.

whence the common classical denomination of the mast as arbor, was in ancient times the incarnation and midpoint of the whole ship, and "in der soliden Festigkeit des Mastes beruht das ganze Heil des Schiffes."⁶⁷ This being the case, the mast itself came to be the highest expression of the notion of victory over the sea and its demonic power, and the fate of the mast was directly related to the fate of those contained within the ship. To the Christian, the form of the mast implies that of the cross, and just as the ship cannot go without a mast, so could the ship of the Church not proceed without its metaphoric mast, the cross.⁶⁸ Not only is it the cross by which the ship of the Church is propelled, but the ship is actually built from the wood of the cross,⁶⁹ and this sums up the central role and importance of the crucifixion to Christian metaphor and eschatology. In accord with this analogy, Noah's ark, and afterwards all ships, come to prefigure the Church, and as the Church is the mystical corpus Christi, so does the ship become compared to the crucified body of Christ.⁷⁰ Noah is a common figure of Christ,⁷¹ and entrance into the ark is a

⁶⁷ Rahner, "Mastbaum und Antenne," p. 131. See this article generally for relevant classical references on the topic at hand.

⁶⁸ For references, see Rahner, "Das Schiff aus Holz," p. 196, and "Odysseus am Mastbaum," pp. 143-4.

⁶⁹ The locus classicus for this notion is De civitate Dei, xv, 26, which exerted a great influence on later exegesis.

⁷⁰ See, for example, Ps.-Ambrose, Sermo, 37 (PL, 17, 700).

⁷¹ See Mt. 24:37-8, Lk. 17:26-7, Heb. 11:7, 2 Pet. 2:5,

figure of fastening Christ on the cross.⁷² For St. Augustine, Noah's ark prefigures the lignum crucis,⁷³ and already in the Petrine typology of the New Testament was salvation in the ark typologically related to Christian baptism (cf. 1 Pet. 3:20-1). The same mode of interpretation which is applied to Noah's ark comes to be applied to the navicula Petri, and Bede, in commenting on Matthew 8:23-7, says, "Navicula, quam ascendunt, nulla melius quam dominicae passionis arbor intellegitur."⁷⁴ The most important New Testament expression of this ship allegory is Acts 27, and Paul's conclusion in the matter is that no-one can be saved unless he remains within the metaphorical ship of the Church (v. 31).

This comparison, however, is hardly original to New Testament typology, and Israel, a common Old Testament type of the Church,⁷⁵ is referred to as a ship in the apocryphal Testament of Naphtali.⁷⁶ So in classical times was the notion of the ship of state a commonplace,

and also Ambrose, PL, 15, 1610; Augustine, PL, 35, 1022; PL, 41, 472; Paulinus of Nola, PL, 61, 200, 359; Rabanus Maurus, PL, 107, 320, 525.

⁷² Rahner, "Die Arche Noe," p. 162.

⁷³ PL, 40, 334.

⁷⁴ In Matthaei Evangelium Expositio, ii, 8 (PL, 92, 42D). For further discussion and references, see Rahner, "Navicula Petri," passim. Peter and Noah are typologically related, and both, like Christ, are "die Schiffsenker einer neuen Weltzeit" (p. 17).

⁷⁵ Cf. Gregory, In Librum Primum Regum Expositiones, iv, 4, 29 (PL, 79, 255A).

⁷⁶ Testament of Naphtali, 6, in R.H. Charles, ed., The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1913), ii, p. 338.

and for the Greeks and Romans, a successful sea-voyage was metaphorically indicative of a well-ordered commonwealth.⁷⁷ This allegory is used at the end of the Old English Christ II (850-66), and James W. Marchand points out similar examples in the eleventh century Ezzolied and in the Old Norse "Physiologus MS."⁷⁸ A microcosmic reflection of the ship of the Church is the notion of man as a living ship, or the related concept of the ship of the soul. In the first case, shipwreck is analogous to death, and in the second to sin, which is the cause of the second or spiritual death.⁷⁹ Thus the dimensions of the ark are proportional to those of the human body, and De civitate Dei, xv, 26, is again the most important authority. The iconographic depictions of ships on early Christian monuments are often accompanied by the representation of doves, thus explicitly associating the journey of the ships to the other world with the notion of dove as soul.⁸⁰ Old English examples of the metaphoric

⁷⁷ Goldammer, "Das Schiff der Kirche," p. 233.

⁷⁸ James W. Marchand, "The Ship Allegory in the Ezzolied and in Old Icelandic," Neophilologus, 60 (1976), 238-50.

⁷⁹ For all this, see Rahner, "Das Schiff aus Holz," pp. 214-22, and "Antenna Crucis VI: Der Schiffbruch und die Planke des Heils," ZKT, 79 (1957), 129-69. For references on the ark as analogous to the ship of the soul, see Daniélou, From Shadows to Reality, p. 110.

⁸⁰ Kurt Goldammer, "Navis Ecclesiae: Eine unbekannte altchristliche Darstellung der Schiffsallegorie," ZNTW, 40 (1941), p. 83, and Stuhlfauth, passim. For the notion of the dove as representing the soul, see Friedrich Sühling, Die Taube als religiöses Symbol im christlichen Altertum (Freiburg: Herder, 1930).

ship of the soul are The Wanderer and The Seafarer, where the travels of the personae over the ocean are directly analogous to their development from modcearig to snottor on mode, and we have already discussed the applications of this theme in our chapter preceding. The notion of shipwreck as sin draws its currency from the Pauline metaphor of the shipwreck of the faith in 1 Tim. 1:19 (cf. also 1 Tim. 6:9), and Hilary of Poitiers can thus use such an expression as, "Omnis etenim anima infidelis, in saeculi huius tamquam maris profundo naufraga" in his commentary on Psalm 51.⁸¹ Adam's sin is archetypal in this context, and through him the whole world has become shipwrecked. The only rescue from this universal shipwreck of sin is through the efficacy of the Incarnation and crucifixion, and Rabanus Maurus neatly sums up the entire concept when he says, "Crux portus est in totius orbis naufragio."⁸² An interesting analogue from Old Norse is the story, recounted in Landnámabók, of the two foster-brothers Órlygr and Kollr. When approaching Iceland, the first of these asks Þp. Patrick for aid and lands safely on the island; the second invokes Þórr and is shipwrecked.⁸³

Using the information we have presented above, it is

⁸¹ Hilary, Tractatus super Psalmos, li, 17 (PL, 9, 316AB).

⁸² De laudibus sanctae crucis, ii, 26 (PL, 107, 291C). Cited in Rahner, "Schiffbruch," p. 141.

⁸³ Jakob Benediktsson, ed., Íslendingabók/Landnámabók (Reykjavík: Íslensk fornrit, 1968), pp. 53-5.

now possible to reexamine such a poem as the Old English Exodus. As we have shown,⁸⁴ the Exodus has strong baptismal implications, and as baptism is only efficacious through the agency of the sacrifice performed on the cross, so is the image of the cross one of the controlling images of the poem, which is not only baptismal but Christological in emphasis. Huppé is quite right when he says that the Exodus deals with the theme of escape from this world through Christ,⁸⁵ but he fails to realize the full implications of his statement, and this can well be elaborated upon here. The first passage which demands our attention is that of the cloud/sail in lines 71-97. At our first introduction, we are told that God placed a cloud before them, that it both protected and guided them, and that men marvelled at it.

þar halig god
wið færbryne folc gescylde,
bælce oferbrædde byrnendne heofon,
halgan nette hatwendne lyft.
Hæfde wederwolcen widum fæðmum
eorðan and uprodor efne gedæled,
lædde leodwerod, ligfyr adranc,
hate heofontorht. Hæleð wafedon,
drihta gedrymost. Dægsceades hleo
wand ofer wolcnum (71b-80a).

First of all, clouds are a commonplace expression of divine protection, both in classical and in Christian times. Notable examples are the cloud Venus casts around Aeneas and his companions, in order that they might view Carthage unmolested (Aeneid, i, 411-14), and that cast about Andreas's companions while they are in

⁸⁴ See above, pp. 82-3.

⁸⁵ Huppé, Doctrine and Poetry, p. 217.

Mermedonia so that they might not be injured by evil foes (Andreas, 1044-8). Similarly, Rabanus Maurus says that nubes are to be allegorically interpreted as

protectio Dei, ut in Exodo: "Cumque ascendisset Moyses, operuit montem nubes," quod cum aliquis ad contemplationis altitudinem pertingit, necesse est ut ei protectio divina assit, ne aberret.⁸⁶

This last example is particularly relevant in the present context. The cloud not only protected the people but also "lædde leodwerod," and the latter of these functions is only a special case of the former, since by guiding the Israelites, the cloud prevents them from coming to harm in the hostile land of the Egyptians. The cloud here, although it is not yet specifically associated with the cross, has a function similar to that of the cross, and as the cross protects one from evil spirits and demons, so does the cloud protect the Israelites both from the desert sun and, implicitly, from the evil Egyptians. If one accepts the baptismal thrust of the poem, the cloud is in some sense protecting the Israelites--or Christians in embryo--from the assaults of Satan in the baptismal pool. Israel is, again, a popular Old Testament type of the Church, and Egypt, by contrast, is presented in the Johannine Apocalypse as a symbol of the place where Christ was crucified (Apoc. 11:8), thus setting up a polar opposition between the two, as between the faithful and the heathen, set apart in their implicit relation to the sign of the cross--in their relation to

⁸⁶ Allegoriae (PL, 112, 1008A).

that which Christians venerate and heathens use as an instrument of torture. A further proleptic hint at the association of cloud and cross is the statement that the cloud "widum fæðmum eorðan and uproðor gedæled," a trait which is very similar to that of the cosmic cross, which embraces the earth as it stretches to the four cardinal points of the compass, thereby indicating the universality of Christ's sacrifice.⁸⁷

In the lines that follow, the poet makes the relationship between cloud and cross explicit.

hæfde wítig god
sunnan siðfæt segle ofertolden,
swa þa mæstrapas men ne cuðon,
ne ða seglrode geseon meah-ton,
eorðbuende ealle cræfte,
hu afæstnæd wæs feldhusa mæst,
siððan he mid wuldre geweorðode
beodenholde. Ða wæs þridða wic
folce to frofre (80b-88a).

The description of the cloud here as a "sail" is of the utmost significance, and in the patristic nautical allegory we have been considering, the sail of the ship is held to be equivalent, first to the mast, and then to the cross which the mast represents.⁸⁸ Further, once the identity of mast and cross is ascertained, the identification of the sail with Christ is, as Goldammer notes,⁸⁹

⁸⁷ For the present, we only mention the notion of the cosmic cross in passing, but we will examine it more fully in our discussion of The Dream of the Rood following (see below, pp. 214-17).

⁸⁸ On the sail as equivalent to the mast, see Ambrose, PL, 16, 297. For the sail as equivalent to the cross, see Ps.-Ambrose, PL, 17, 697. The first of these is cited in Goldammer, "Das Schiff der Kirche," p. 235, and the second in Goldammer, "Navis Ecclesiae," p. 81.

⁸⁹ Goldammer, "Navis Ecclesiae," p. 82.

not far to seek. The use of the word "seglrode"--which Irving, in his edition of the poem, glosses as "yard-arm"⁹⁰--to describe the cloud indicates as well the implicit association with the cross, and it is quite possible to gloss this word simply as "sail-rood."⁹¹ That God covered the "sunnan siðfæt" or "course of the sun" with this sail can be interpreted as an implicit reference to the eschatological role of the cross as shining in the heavens over all in place of the sun, for which we have already cited the witness of Christ III, 1101-02:

ðonne sið reade rod ofer ealle
swegle scineð on þære sunnan gyld.

Cook, in his edition of the Old English Christ, cites Pseudo-Augustine, Sermo 155, as the source of this description,⁹² but the source is no doubt closer to seek in Matthew 24:30--"et tunc parebit signum Filii hominis in caelo"--of which Bede says,

Signum hic aut crucis intelligamus, ut
videant Iudaei in quem compunxerunt, aut
vexillum victoriae triumphantis.⁹³

When Bede speaks here of the sorrows of the Jews, he is thinking, not of Israel as the prototype of the Church,

⁹⁰ Edward Burroughs Irving, Jr., ed., The Old English Exodus (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1953), p. 122.

⁹¹ Cf. Helder, "Etham and the Ethiopians," p. 12, Peter J. Lucas, "Old English Christian Poetry: The Cross in Exodus," in Famulus Christi: Essays in Commemoration of the Thirteenth Centenary of the Birth of the Venerable Bede, ed. Gerald Bonner (London: S.P.C.K., 1976), p. 197, and Lucas, Exodus, p. 90n.

⁹² Cook, The Christ of Cynewulf, pp. 193-4.

⁹³ In Matthaei Evangelium Expositio, iv, 24 (PL, 92, 104B).

but of the Jews as those who rejected the true faith by crucifying Christ, and thus of those who are in fact more closely related to the Egyptians of the Old English Exodus. In the Exodus, then, following the sign of the cross brings its eschatological rewards, and just as evil men will lament, so will good men rejoice in the sign of the cross in the Last Days. Just after this image of the sail covering up the "course of the sun," however, the poet records that men did not understand the sign. This indicates the depth of the mystery of the cross, which cannot be completely or rapidly understood by men on this earth, and the general expansion from the Israelites to all men is made specific in the use of the epithet "eorð-buende." Thus all faithful men--men within the ship of the Church, which is represented by the Israelites--have a long way to go before they can come to their eschatological fulfillment, as foreshadowed in the two lines preceding, just as the Israelites in the poem have a hard battle to fight before they can regain the treasures of Joseph. This supports Earl's contention that the Israelites do not fully understand the nature of their metaphorical voyage,⁹⁴ and indeed, a type can never be completely grasped at the time of its occurrence.

In the two and a half lines following, the Christological implications are continued. Sifððan (86a) refers back to what has just preceded, so the honoring of those faithful to their lord must be equivalent to the placing

⁹⁴ Earl, "Christian Traditions in the Old English Exodus," p. 562.

of the sail in the sky, and if we interpret the sail as Christ, this can refer to the honor done to the faithful on earth by the coming of the Savior. Such an interpretation is reinforced by the statement following that the third encampment came as a comfort to the people, just as on the third day Christ was resurrected to the joy of all true believers. Although it is not just to "read in" more here than was intended, the symbolism of threes is certainly of great importance in the tradition of the Fathers. The paschal triduum is the consummate drama of the Incarnation, the central mystery of all Christianity, and it is hardly likely that the poet could use such an expression without some thought for the crucifixion and resurrection. In the context of the poem, the third encampment is exceptional because

	leode ongeton,
dugoð Israhela,	þæt þær drihten cwom
weroda drihten,	wicsteal metan (90b-92),

and this act of God in measuring out the camping place is analogous to the establishment of the New Creation brought about through the efficacy of Christ's crucifixion and resurrection. As God is on the third day the architect of the Israelite camp, so is Christ on the third day the architect of a new order of the world. In more general terms, the Exodus is fulfilled in Christ, the leader of the New Exodus. At this stage, the poet refers once again to the cloud/sail in the form of "beamas twegen" (94b), thus bringing us back to our starting place. In this later reference, however, it is not to be thought that the sign has been doubled, but only that the single

sign followed by the Israelites now has a dual aspect, as appropriate to the difference between night and day--the Israelites could hardly follow a cloud at night or a pillar of fire in the brightness of the desert sun. In accord with our present interpretation of this cloud/sail/pillar image, Cross and Tucker, citing Elfric, contend that the pillar of fire represents Christ,⁹⁵ and that Israel here thus represents the Church in embryo, following Christ.

The implications of this passage are further expanded and corroborated by the continuing nautical imagery in the poem. The Israelites and the Egyptians are contrastingly characterized as "sea-men" and "land-men," and the dichotomy here is one between the ship of the Church, faring on the sea of this world, and the sinful Egyptians remaining behind on the shore of earthly pleasures which the Israelites have metaphorically renounced. The baptismal implications can hardly be doubted, and in Pauline typology, the Exodus is a type for entry into the Christian faith.

Nolo enim vos ignorare fratres, quoniam patres nostri omnes sub nube fuerunt, et omnes mare transierunt, et omnes in Moyse baptizati sunt in nube, et in mare: et omnes eandem escam spiritalem manducaverunt, et omnes eundem potum spiritalem

⁹⁵ Thorpe, II, p. 200; Cross and Tucker, "Allegorical Tradition and the Old English Exodus," p. 123. See also Ambrose, De sacramentis, i, 6, 22 (PL, 16, 442AB), where the pillar of fire is said to represent Christ, who scattered the shadows of unbelief and brought the light of truth, and the pillar of cloud to represent the Holy Spirit. For further references, see John F. Vickrey, "Exodus and the Battle in the Sea," Traditio, 28 (1972), p. 138.

biberunt (bibebant autem de spiritali,
consequente eos, petra: petra autem erat
Christus) (1 Cor. 10:1-4).

Where mare here refers to the waters of baptism, the nubis indicates the role of the crucifixion/cross in rendering the waters of baptism efficacious and refers directly to Christ. Thus it is interpreted by St. Augustine.

Cur ergo non et nubes Christus, et columna, quia rectus et firmus et fulciens infirmitatem nostram: per noctem lucens, per diem non lucens; ut qui non vident, videant; et qui vident, caeci fiant? Nubes et mare Rubrum; Baptismus utique Christi sanguine consecratus: hostes sequentes a tergo; moriuntur peccata praeterita.⁹⁶

The Israelites are in the ship of the Church, but the ship of the Church is implicitly fabricated of the wood of the cross, thus metaphorically linking all the nautical imagery in the poem with the cloud/sail/pillar of lines 71-97. An interesting analogue for the notion of the Israelites as "sea-men," even when they are not on the waters, is the first Nisibene Hymn of Ephraim Syrus, where Ephraim says: "O Helmsman of the Ark, be thou my pilot on dry land."⁹⁷ One can also explain the at times confusing convergence of nautical and military imagery in the poem by reference to the cross. As battle-standard, the cross is a sign of victory over the heathen and as mast, a sign of victory over the demonic and God-opposing

⁹⁶ Contra Faustum Manichaeum, xii, 29 (PL, 42, 270).

⁹⁷ Ephraim Syrus, Nisibene Hymns, i. Cited in Campbell Bonner, "Desired Haven," HTR, 34 (1941), p. 62.

power of the sea.⁹⁸ The Israelites' victory over the Egyptians is summed up in the words,

folc was on lande,
hæfde wuldres beam werud gelæded,
halige heapas, on hild godes (567b-9),

and although "on hild godes" here clearly means "in or into the protection of God," the implications of "hild" as "battle" are unmistakable.⁹⁹ This "wuldres beam" is identical with the "beamas twegen" of line 94a, and both must be interpreted as referring to the cross.

The seemingly intrusive passage concerning Noah and Abraham is relevant here as well. Farrell demonstrates the relevance of this passage in terms of the theme of the covenant, which he sees as the central theme of the poem, and he claims that Noah and Abraham are further examples of those who, like the Israelites of the Exodus, hold to their covenant with God.¹⁰⁰ The Christological relevance, however, is clear as well. Moses, Noah, and Isaac are among the commonest Old Testament types of Christ,¹⁰¹ and all are great leaders of the people. Noah's ark is consistent with the other nautical imagery in the poem, and Noah, the "snotter sæleoda" (374a), is the helmsman in the ark as Christ is the helmsman in the

⁹⁸ See Rahner, "Mastbaum und Antenne," p. 153.

⁹⁹ Cf. Earl, "Christian Traditions in the Old English Exodus," p. 557.

¹⁰⁰ Farrell, "A Reading of OE. Exodus," p. 410 et passim.

¹⁰¹ For Moses and Noah as types of Christ, see above, pp. 113n., 152n. For Isaac as a type of Christ, see Bede, Vita Sanctorum Abbatum, i, 9 (PL, 94, 720C), and Augustine, De civitate Dei, xvi, 32 (PL, 41, 511).

ship of the Church or as Moses is the leader of the Israelite "sæmen." Before this, the poet says of Noah that "Hæfde him on hreðre halige treowa" (366), which is best translated "He had in his breast a holy faith or the holy covenant," although one must admit the possibility of a pun on the word "treow," implying the sense of "tree," as indicating the cross. This is particularly cogent in light of the metaphorical/typological relationship between the ark and the wood of the cross, as well as in light of the associations already developed in lines 71-97. The Noah passage is also consonant with the notion of God's protection and rescue of the Israelites in the Exodus, and the more general idea of divine rescue is quite often associated with the rescue of Noah,¹⁰² with the Flood, like the Crossing of the Red Sea, being a common type of baptism. In the story of Abraham, the word treowe is used twice (423a, 426b), again with possibilities of double entendre. The poet says that Abraham was going to sacrifice "his swæne sunu to sigetibre" (402), and the fact that Isaac is a "victory-offering" is significant in the context of the poem, which deals with the victory of the Israelites over the Egyptians in their adherence to the "wuldres beam," which is the cross. Isaac is a "victory-offering" in this passage, just as Christ is the "victory-offering" through which one is able to overcome Satan in this world and the significance of which is symbolized in the sign of the cross.

¹⁰² L. Budde, "Die rettende Arche Noes," Rivista di Archeologia Cristiana, 32 (1956), p. 56.

The whole poem then, here as elsewhere, is implicitly unified in the image of the cross.

Before proceeding to examine Elene, which, after The Dream of the Rood, is the most important document in Old English poetry dealing with the cross, it is perhaps useful to examine briefly the concept of kingship, which plays an important part in the poem and which is related to the iconography of the cross. The general religious function and eschatological role of kings is a widely noted commonplace, and according to A.M. Hocart, whose opinion in the matter we may but need not accept, belief in the divinity of kings is the earliest known form of religion.¹⁰³ The divine associations and priestly function of kings in Anglo-Saxon times is in any case clear, and not only did most of the royal genealogies of the period start with Woden, but most of the Anglo-Saxon saints sprang from royal families.¹⁰⁴ In the corpus of Old English poetry, both God and Christ are referred to as cyning so often as to make documentation superfluous, and Satan, by contrast, is characterized as a bad king (see, for example, Juliana, 683-8). The earthly king thus shares in the universal kingship of Christ, and a sin against the king in Anglo-Saxon times was equivalent

¹⁰³ A.M. Hocart, Kingship (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1927), p. 7.

¹⁰⁴ William A. Chaney, The Cult of Kingship in Anglo-Saxon England: The Transition from Paganism to Christianity (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1970), pp. 21ff., 80.

to a sin against Christ.¹⁰⁵ In Old Testament, as in more recent times, the king was anointed, or christus, and this fact was readily subsumed into the Messianic typology of early Christianity.¹⁰⁶ Hocart further notes that in Christian terms, the royal unction, at which the divine spirit is infused into the earthly regent, was held to be analogous to the baptism of Christ.¹⁰⁷ So also does Kantorowicz demonstrate the relationship between classical emperor worship and the worship of Christ, as expressed in the influence of the Roman imperial lauds on the coronation liturgy of the Western Church.¹⁰⁸

As the king is associated with the divine, so is he associated with crops, vegetation, and fertility, and the sacral king is often the guardian of the tree of life or of paradise.¹⁰⁹ There is a magical side to kingship, and the king is held to control the springs of power belonging to the people and is not only responsible for good crops and fertility, but also for healing and the general

¹⁰⁵ Alastair Guinan, "The Christian Concept of Kingship as Manifested in the Liturgy of the Western Church," HTR, 49 (1956), p. 234, and Chaney, The Cult of Kingship, pp. 251-2, the latter of whom notes that king killers were therefore held to be analogous to Judas Iscariot.

¹⁰⁶ Cf. Daniélou, The Bible and the Liturgy, pp. 114-22.

¹⁰⁷ Hocart, pp. 92-3.

¹⁰⁸ Ernst H. Kantorowicz, Laudes Regiae: A Study in Liturgical Acclamations and Mediaeval Ruler Worship (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1958).

¹⁰⁹ On this topic generally, see James, The Tree of Life, pp. 93-123.

prosperity of the land.¹¹⁰ God gives rain, fruitful seasons, and food (cf. Acts 14:16; Christ II, 604-06a), and the king, as God's representative on earth, is thus made responsible for dispensing the same blessings. In archetypal terms, "Everything that will ensure a good harvest (rain, everything to do with weather), and whatever purifies from sin, falls under the jurisdiction of the sky,"¹¹¹ and as Hocart points out, a king's miracles are analogous to those of the sun, by which things are made to grow and flourish.¹¹² For the Christian, Christ is the metaphorical sun--the ultimate sky-epiphany, if you will--and king and Christ are analogous in this respect. The sympathy with nature which the king's magical control over the forces of nature would imply is demonstrated in Christ, of whom men say, "Qualis est hic, quia venti et mare obediunt ei" (Mt. 8:27), and in Rígsbula, 43, ability to calm the sea is one of the traits of a king. The relation of this notion to that of the ship of the Church, built of the wood of the cross and guided by Christ, is plain. In addition to his specifically thaumaturgic functions, the king is the bringer of victory and leader of the army, just as God is the Dominus exer-

¹¹⁰ Cf. Hans Naumann, "Die magische Seite des altgermanischen Königtums und ihr Fortwirken in christlicher Zeit," in Wirtschaft und Kultur: Festschrift zum 70. Geburtstag von Alfons Dopsch (Baden bei Wien: Rohrer Verlag, 1938), 1-12. On the thaumaturgic powers of the Anglo-Saxon king-saints, see Chaney, The Cult of Kingship, p. 83.

¹¹¹ Eliade, Patterns, p. 78.

¹¹² Hocart, p. 41.

cituum. The aftermath of victory is peace, and Chaney cites the emphasis on the good king in Anglo-Saxon England as a rex pacificus.¹¹³ Beowulf's fifty year reign of peace is thus one of the surest indications of his merit, and peace on earth is only a reflection of the pax aeterna of the Heavenly City, ruled over by Christ. Just as a king and his people are pious, so do they prosper, and Eddius relates, for example, how when King Ecgfrith and Queen Ethelthryth obeyed the directions of Bishop Wilfrid, they had peace, prosperity, and victory over their enemies, but that when they fell out with Wilfrid, the king's triumphs ceased.¹¹⁴ Examples of the relationship between kings and prosperity are particularly plentiful in Old Norse, and in Ynglinga saga, Snorri tells us that among the Swedes the responsibility for good and bad times was attached to the king.

Gerðisk þar hallæri mikit ok sultr. Kenn-
du þeir þat konungi sínum, svá sem Svíar
eru vanir at kenna konungi bæði ár ok hal-
læri.¹¹⁵

Similarly, Halfdan the Black was such a good king, and things were so prosperous during his reign--he was "allra konunga ársælstr"--that after his death, the people divided his body into four parts, so that each district could have the benefit of his remains.¹¹⁶ Several other kings--among whom Hákon the Good, Sigurðr Magnússon,

¹¹³ Chaney, The Cult of Kingship, p. 93.

¹¹⁴ Life of Bishop Wilfrid, ch. 19.

¹¹⁵ Ynglinga saga, ch. 43.

¹¹⁶ Hálfðanar saga svarta, ch. 9.

Magnus the Blind, and Haraldr gillí--are described as good kings, during whose reigns there was peace and prosperity,¹¹⁷ and examples of the thaumaturgic powers of St. Olaf are spread throughout Óláfs saga helga. Contrastingly, the sons of Eiríkr were bad kings, and affairs in their country were proportionately confused, with bad crops and not even any fish.¹¹⁸ So do the heathen men in Laxdæla saga attribute the bad weather in Norway to the new faith introduced by King Olaf Tryggvason, by which, they say, the gods must have been made angry.¹¹⁹ In the Poetic Edda, as well, we are told that Helgi was a true king and that all the household people therefore had good hopes for prosperity,¹²⁰ and in the prose introduction to Gróttasöngur, the peace in the land is ascribed to Fróði, since he is the most powerful of all the northern kings.

When things do not go well and life is not prosperous, the king is responsible and is often sacrificed as a propitiation to the gods. This notion is quite commonplace, and the most famous example is in chapter 43 of Ynglinga saga, where King Óláfr is burned ^{as an offering to Óðinn} on account of the nation's lack of prosperity and the people's consequent belief that he had been behindhand in his offerings to the gods. This ritual slaying of the king in order to

¹¹⁷ Hákonar saga góða, ch. 11, 22; Magnússona saga, ch. 33; Magnúss saga blinda ok Haralds gilla, ch. 1.

¹¹⁸ Haralds saga gráfeldar, ch. 2, 16.

¹¹⁹ Laxdæla saga, ch. 40. The edition I have consulted is Einar Ól. Sveinsson, ed., Laxdæla saga (Reykjavík: Íslensk fornrit, 1934).

¹²⁰ Helgakviða Hundingsbana I, 7.

improve the condition of the people is analogous to Christ's sacrifice in the crucifixion,¹²¹ and Graves notes that the early Celts "saw Jesus as the latest theophany of the same suffering sacred king whom they had worshipped under various names from time immemorial."¹²² In Rígsbula, 43, a further attribute of kings is that they know runes, which is the Norse equivalent of saying that they possess the highest wisdom, and this also is consonant with the relationship between earthly kingship and the universal rulership of Christ, from whom all wisdom flows. The notion of kings as the dispensers of wisdom is important in the Old English Elene, and Elene is Constantine's representative here, much as the cross is Christ's representative in The Dream of the Rood--both dispense the wisdom of the king and aid in the conversion of sinful humanity, represented in the one case by the Jews and in the other by the Dreamer, "forwundod mid wom-mum."

From the beginning of Elene, the kingship of Constantine is compared to that of Christ, and while Constantine is a "riht cyning" (13b), Christ is the "cyn-inga wulder" (5b). In lines 1-7a, the "time" of the poem is established with respect to the rulership of Christ, and then, in lines 7b-14a, with respect to "Constantines caserdom."

¹²¹ Jung, Psychology and Religion, pp. 269-70.

¹²² Robert Graves, The White Goddess: A Historical Grammar of Poetic Myth (1966; rpt. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1975), p. 143.

þa wæs agangen geara hwyrftum
 tu hund ond þreo geteled rimes,
 swylce XXX eac, þinggemearces,
 wintra for worulde, þæs þe wealdend god
 acenned wearð, cyninga wuldor,
 in middangeard þurh mennisc heo,
 soðfæstra leoht. þa wæs syxte gear
 Constantines caserdomes,
 þæt he Romwara in rice wearð
 ahæfen, hildfruma, to hereteman.
 Wæs se leodhwata lindgeborga
 eorlum arfæst. Eðelinges weox
 rice under roderum. He wæs riht cyning,
 guðweard gumena. (1-14a)

These two descriptions come together in the four lines
 following, where Cynewulf's description, although liter-
 ally of Constantine, could apply equally well to Christ.

Hine god trymede
 mærdum ond mihtum, þæt he manegum wearð
 geond middangeard mannum to hroðer,
 werþeodum to wræce, syððan wæpen ahof
 wið hetendum. (14b-18a)

The relationship between Constantine and Christ is fur-
 ther indicated by their respective characterizations as
 "wigena hleo" (150b) and "gasta helm" (176b). Constan-
 tine is the protector of men on earth and saves them from
 physical overthrow and death as Christ is the protector
 of men's souls, saving them from the second or spiritual
 death. The story of the crucifixion immediately follow-
 ing this characterization of Christ (179-88) explicitly
 makes the connection between Constantine's victory and
 Christ's, especially as summed up in the sign of the
 cross,

Alysde leoda bearn of locan deofla,
 geomre gastas, ond him gife sealde
 þurh þa ilcan gesceaft þe him geywed wearð
 sylfum on gesyhðe, sigores tacen,
 wið þeoda præce (181-85a),

and the cross, as Earl R. Anderson contends, is the sym-

bolie centre of the poem.¹²³ Christ's kingship is specifically associated with the cross, and the Blickling-homilist says, for example, that Christ dwelt joyfully on earth "oppæt he becom to þam heahsetle þære rode"¹²⁴-- "until he came to the throne of the rood." In the crucifixion, Christ fulfilled the regal duty of protecting his subjects, who in this case are all mankind, from harm, and so does Constantine become a worthy king by protecting his people with the sign of the cross. Late in the poem, Cynewulf describes the cross as a great leaf-covered tree (1222-6), and in so doing, he metaphorically indicates the nature of the regeneration which comes from conversion, just as the raising of the dead man through the agency of the cross (876-89a) is an objective manifestation of the efficacy of the crucifixion. Cynewulf's emphasis is spiritual, and in the passage on the finding of the true cross, he describes not the object, but its effect, with the implicit conversion which takes place (889b-98a) demonstrating comprehension of the spiritual meaning of the cross.¹²⁵

þær was lof hafen
fæger mid þy folce. Fæder weorðodon,

¹²³ Earl R. Anderson, "Cynewulf's Elene: Manuscript Divisions and Structural Symmetry," MP, 72 (1974), p. 115.

¹²⁴ Blickling Homilies, p. 9. Cf. the non-Vulgate version of Ps. 95:10 which was used by both Tertullian, Adversus Marcionem, iii, 19 (PL, 2, 376), and Augustine, Enarrationes in Psalmos, xcv, 11 (PL, 37, 1234), and which includes the phrase "Dominus regnavit a ligno." The Old English version reads:

secgað nu on cynnum and on cneorissum,
þæt from treowe becwom tīrfæst rice
drihten ure (Paris Psalter, 95, 9).

¹²⁵ Cf. Regan, "Cynewulf's Elene," pp. 49, 52.

ond þone soðan sunu wealdendes
wordum heredon. Sie him wuldor ond þanc
a butan ende eallra gesceafta!

Ða wæs þam folce on ferhðsefan,
ingemynde, swa him a scyle,
wundor þa þe worhte weoroda dryhten
to feorhnere fira cynne,
lifes lattiw. (889b-98a)

At the end of the poem, Cynewulf's ^{attitude is} that it is the duty of those who know to teach others (1236ff.), and now that he has gained wisdom from God as a comfort in old age, he passes this wisdom on, using his divinely given gift of poetry. Not only is this what every reader of the poem should do, but it is paradigmatic for the entire action of the poem, in which we have a progressive series of revelations and teaching. After Constantine finally understands the truth, he begins to preach and devotes himself to God's service (198-202), and his devotion to the faith, after he has read the story of the crucifixion, is metaphorically expressed in the statement that he was "forð gemyndig ymb þæt mære treo" (213b-14a). After describing Constantine's devotion, Cynewulf relates that Constantine commissioned his mother to seek after the true cross (214b-19a), and her mission, which is primarily evangelical, is thus established in terms of the cross. The nodal significance and baptismal implications of her sea-voyage which follows (225-55) are clear, and the implicit hardships of such a voyage foreshadow the hardships of converting the Jews in the latter portions of the poem. Her ship implies the ship of the Church, and this is in accord with the contentions of Regan and Hill that Elene herself is meant to suggest the

Church.¹²⁶ The significance of this voyage, with Constantine representing, or at least analogous to, Christ, and with Elene as a type of the Church, is reinforced by the reference to the troop's having sought the "wæges helm" (230), which is not only an epithet for the sea but can indicate the "protector of the waves" as well. Such a phrase could refer to either Constantine or Christ, both of whom, in their mutual regal function, are sufficiently in sympathy with nature to be described as the "wæges helm." Similarly, when Cynewulf refers to the dashing of the waves against the side of the ship (238b-9), one is reminded yet again of the "unde tribulationum" which beat against the ship of the Church.¹²⁷ Thus when the poet says,

Ða wæs orcnæwe idese siðfæt,
siððan wæges helm werode gesohte (229-30),

this statement may be symbolically read as, "Then the woman's journey (the metaphorical journey of the ship of the Church) became widely known, after the troop (mankind) sought the protector of the waves (Christ)." The ship of the Church is, once again, built of the wood of the cross, and the implicit ship/Church/cross association here is well expressed in the dual purpose of the voyage to find the true cross and to convert the Jews, thus making the inventio crucis both a literal fact and the symbol of conversion. When Elene arrives among the

¹²⁶ Regan, "Cynewulf's Elene," p. 30; Hill, "Sapiental Structure," pp. 166-7.

¹²⁷ See above, p. 84.

Jews, the learning/teaching process of the first part of the poem continues, and after Judas is converted, he debates with the devil (898b-952) and proceeds to spread the truth among others (1038b-41a). The poem is aimed, finally, at the conversion of the reader, and just as Cynewulf and Constantine and Elene and Judas have taught what they know, so must the penitent reader of the poem.

An interesting adjunct to the role of the cross in the poem is the theme of treasure. In Constantine's vision, Cynewulf describes the cross as adorned with gold and gems (88-92), and this is a direct foreshadowing of Elene's command, after the finding of the true cross, that it be similarly adorned.

Heo þa rode heht
golde beweorcean ond gimcynnum,
mid þam æðelestum eorcnanstanum
besettan searocræftum ond þa in seolfran fæt
locum belucan. Þær þæt lifes treo,
selest siðebeam, siððan wunode
æðelum anbræce (1022-28a).

These two passages indicate, once again, the dual nature of the cross as both physical object and spiritual sign. Elene commands that the physical object be adorned, but the fact that Constantine has already seen the cross so adorned indicates the a priori nature of Christ's victory over Satan in this world--it is a foregone conclusion but is consummated and made manifest in the crucifixion.

Cynewulf says in the lines following (1028b-32a) that the cross, thus adorned, was an aid to men, but before the true cross was ever discovered, Constantine had conquered the heathen through its power, and this indicates, as before, the spiritual reality behind the physical

sign. Another aspect of the cross as treasure is implied in the relationship of Constantine and Christ. As Constantine, who commissioned Elene's symbolic voyage, is a "sinces brytta" (194b), so is Christ, who established the Church, the giver of those spiritual treasures which are indicated in the sign of the cross. The Blickling-homilist describes Christ as a "goldhord,"¹²⁸ and Christ is thus both the wisdom by which men may come to heaven and the dispenser of that wisdom. So does Cynewulf refer to the cross as a "goldhord" (790), revealed to all men by the "gasta scyppend," and the two are in some sense synonymous.¹²⁹ The contrast in all this is that of heavenly and earthly treasures, and the cross, unlike the treasure which dragons guard, is the only source of the "real." Satan says,

Nu cwom elpeodig,
pone ic ær on firenum fæstne talde,
hafað mec bereafod rihta gehwylces,
feohgestreona (907b-10a),

but he speaks here only of earthly treasure, and the spiritual meaning of the cross is as lost to him as it was at first to the Jews. In heaven, however, there is eternal wealth (1315-16a), and the raising up of the cross from darkness--"under neolum niðer nasse gehyde in þeostorcofan" (831-32a)--to light not only indicates Christ's resurrection from the tomb and the raising up of those

¹²⁸ Blickling Homilies, pp. 9, 11.

¹²⁹ For the notion of the cross in Elene as a symbol of wisdom, in which the inventio crucis is a metaphor for the gaining of knowledge, see Fish, "Theme and Pattern in Cynewulf's Elene," passim.

bound in hell, but is also a paradigm for the entire conversion process made possible through the crucifixion and represented in the symbol of the cross. The cross is a "treasure" on earth, but by worshipping it in this life, we will be able to share in the eschatological treasure, and this is a practical demonstration of Christ's advice in Matthew 6:20: "Thesaurizate autem vobis thesauros in caelo."

If Constantine is analogous to Christ in the poem, his mother Elene can not only represent the Church, but can be associated as well with the Blessed Virgin, and her constant denomination as "cwen" reminds one of Mary's role as the queen of heaven. Here, however, Elene's two symbolic functions come together, since, as Rabanus Maurus says, referring to Ps. 44:10, "Regina est sancta Ecclesia...quod sancta Ecclesia, in vitae rectitudine consistens, a Christo est electa."¹³⁰ Elene is closely associated with the cross as both its finder and the teacher of its worship, and the reward of those who venerate the cross and remember the crucifixion is not only to have treasures in heaven but to be in the presence of Mary.

Sie para manna gehwam
behliden helle duru, heofones ontyned,
ece geopenad engla rice,
dream unhwilen, ond hira dæl scired
mid Marian, þe on gemynd nime
þære deorestan dægweorðunga
rode under roderum, þa se ricesta
ealles oferwealdend earme beþehte (1228b-35).

In other words, those who follow Constantine's mother on

¹³⁰ Allegoriae (PL, 112, 1038C).

earth will have the privilege of being with Christ's mother in heaven, and the spiritual implications of the contrast cannot be missed.

The reference to Mary, then, and the implicit association of Mary and Elene, gives us one more point of emphasis for the eschatological role of the cross in the poem. The cross is efficacious in opening the doors of heaven, just as in pre-Christian Judaism, marking with the sign of the cross was held to exempt one from the Last Judgement.

Another document dealing with the themes of baptism and conversion, as understood and achieved through the cross as symbolic focal point, is The Dream of the Rood.¹³¹ The most explicit conversion in the poem is that of the Dreamer, for which the Cross is directly responsible. It is not merely a symbol, as in Elene, of the process of redemption, but is actually the agent of divine instruction and mercy. There are clear contrasts between the Cross and the Dreamer--as when the dreaming man, lying in the darkness, sees the Cross shining aloft, high above him--but there are also many correspondences. Both the Dreamer and the Cross are isolated as they start out, each in his respective narrative role, and each moves

¹³¹ In the following discussion of The Dream of the Rood, I have subsumed without notice various portions of my own "The Role of the Cross in the Dream of the Rood," M.A. Thesis Virginia, 1975.

through the mystery of the crucifixion to a final fellowship with God. Each moves from bewilderment and wonder to ultimate knowledge of the things of heaven, in the consummation of a symbolic pilgrimage, and as Christ is the teacher of the Cross, so is the Cross the teacher of the Dreamer, "leading him from fear to hope to the eschatological contemplation of eternal joy."¹³² The development of the Cross, which at the beginning is merely an ordinary tree "holtes on ende" (29b) indicates the potential of development for the Dreamer, who at the beginning of the poem lies in darkness "synnum fah, forwunded mid wommum" (13b-14a), and by extension, indicates the potential for development available to all men through the grace of God. The poet demonstrates this possibility for upward movement by the noticeable juxtaposition of jewelled Cross and sinful Dreamer.

Sylllic wæs se sigebeam, ond ic synnum fah,
forwunded mid wommum. Geseah ic wuldres treow,
wædum geweorðode, wynnum scinan,
gegyred mid golde; gimmas hæfdon
bewrigene weorðlice wealdendes treow (13-17).

The Cross and the Dreamer are further related by the correspondence of the Dreamer's statement that he is "forwunded mid wommum" with the Cross's later statement that "eall ic wæs mid strælum forwunded" (62b). It is commonplace to cite this correspondence and to note the association of the "strælum" here with the arrows of sin, shot by Satan.¹³³ One can avoid these "wounds of sin" by

¹³² Fleming, "'The Dream of the Rood' and Anglo-Saxon Monasticism," p. 61.

¹³³ As pointed out by Michael Swanton, ed., The Dream

forswearing "idle lustas" (Christ II, 756b) and by relying on the power of God.

Ne þearf him ondrædan deofla strælas
 ænig on eorðan ælda cynnes,
 gromra garfare, gif hine god scildeþ,
 duguða dryhten (Christ II, 779-82a).

This notion of God shielding the righteous is surely based on the armatura Dei of Ephesians 6 and is related to the protective cloud/pillar in the Exodus. By a similar token, Christ is the "Medicina vulnerum nostrorum quae pependit in ligno,"¹³⁴ and the implication of St. Augustine's phraseology is the theological commonplace that Christ was able to become the "Medicina vulnerum nostrorum" by his hanging on the cross. Thus the wounding of the Cross is not only the symbolic wounding of sin, brought on by its unworthiness,¹³⁵ but it is also the means by which man can avoid the wounds of sin, since the Cross is the vehicle of redemption, both through its role in the crucifixion and through its role as teacher

of the Rood (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1970), p. 20. The longest treatment of the arrows of sin in Old English is Christ II, 756-79, but see also Christ III, 1312-15, Andreas, 1443-5, Guthlac A, 184-6, Juliana, 382-97, and Beowulf, 1739-57. In Christ and Satan, 1306, Satan himself is referred to as being "synnum forwundod," and in The Blickling Homilies, p. 241, Andreas addresses Satan as "þu heardeste stræl." For more on the arrows of sin, see Klaeber, "Die christlichen Elemente," pp. 128-32, and S.J. Crawford, "Beowulfiana," RES, 7 (1931), 448-50.

¹³⁴ Augustine, Confessiones, ix, 13, 35 (PL, 32, 778).

¹³⁵ An interesting side note to the unworthiness of the Cross is Augustine's statement, De civitate Dei, xii, 1, 2 (PL, 41, 349), that beasts and trees lack the capacity to be blessed: "non omnis beata possit esse creatura (neque enim hoc munus adipiscuntur aut capiunt ferae, ligna, saxa, et si quid eiusmodi est)."

in the poem. This is made explicit when the Cross sums up its own dual function.

On me bearn godes
 þrowode hwile. Forþan ic þrymfæst nu
 hlifige under heofenum, ond ic hælæn mæg
 æghwylcne anra, þara þe him bið egesa to me.
 Iu ic was geworden wita heardost,
 leodum laðost, ærþan ic him lifes weg
 rihtne gerymde, reordberendum (83b-9).

Thus we return to Bede's statement (see above, p. 139) that laymen must be fortified with the cross against the wiles of unclean spirits, or as he says more generally, quoting from the letter of Pope Boniface to King Edwin,

Unde oportet vos, suscepto signo sanctae crucis, per quod humanum genus redemptum est, execrandam diabolicae versutiae subplantationem.¹³⁶

The Cross goes on to say,

Ne þearf ðær þonne ænig anforht wesan
 þe him ær in breostum bereð beacna selest (117-18),

and acceptance of the sign of the cross into one's heart is certainly a paradigm for the consummation of the process of conversion. W.F. Bolton says of this passage, which mirrors line 6 of Tatwine's De Cruce Christi, that it can only refer to the sacrament of baptism, at which one is told: "Accipe signum crucis tam in fronte quam in corde,"¹³⁷ and this is related once again to the notion of the cross-sign as a token on the righteous, showing their ownership by Christ.

Not only is the Cross associated with the Dreamer in

¹³⁶ Historia Ecclesiastica, ii, 10 (PL, 95, 98B).

¹³⁷ W.F. Bolton, "Tatwine's De Cruce Christi and The Dream of the Rood," Archiv, 200 (1963/4), pp. 345-6. See also Alfric (Thorpe, II, p. 266).

the poem, but it is also associated with Christ. Barbara C. Raw notes the use in early Christian art of the jewelled cross as a symbol for Christ,¹³⁸ and J.A. Burrow, after discussing this whole correspondence, says that the Cross is a double surrogate for both the Dreamer and Christ and that its "two functions correspond to the double transcendental-natural image of the Cross established at the beginning of the poem."¹³⁹ The notion of the identity and co-extensiveness of Christ and the cross was common to early Christianity, and Christ's outstretched arms were held to be analogous to the latitudo of the cross.¹⁴⁰ In accord with this, Rosemary Woolf contends that The Dream of the Rood is a product of the Christological debates of the fifth century, with the dualistic notion of Christ as God and man emphasized in the poem and reflected in the description of the Cross,¹⁴¹ although as Fleming points out, it is unlikely that The Dream of the Rood is meant to be a controversial or polemic document or that the poet is attempting to resolve

¹³⁸ Barbara C. Raw, "The Dream of the Rood and its Connections with Early Christian Art," ME, 39 (1970), p. 242.

¹³⁹ J.A. Burrow, "An Approach to The Dream of the Rood," Neophilologus, 43 (1959), p. 127.

¹⁴⁰ Cf. Eleanor Simmons Greenhill, "The Child in the Tree: A Study of the Cosmological Tree in Christian Tradition," Traditio, 10 (1954), pp. 332-3, and Swanton, The Dream of the Rood, p. 55. Similarly, in the Odes of Solomon 22:1-2, cited in Daniélou, Theology of Jewish Christianity, p. 282, the vertical dimension of the cross was held to represent the anabasis and katabasis of the Word.

¹⁴¹ Rosemary Woolf, "Doctrinal Influences on The Dream of the Rood," ME, 27 (1958), 137-53.

difficult bits of Christology.¹⁴² The development of the notion of the identity of Christ and the cross no doubt stems from the famous passage in Paul's Epistle to the Colossians in which the Apostle says that Christ brought peace "per sanguinem eius crucis" (Col. 1:20). The blood of the Cross is the blood of Christ, and the Cross, in protecting men, is a symbol of the agency of divine grace, made efficacious through the blood of Christ. Thus the image of the Cross bleeding on its right side (20a) is meant to represent the suffering of Christ and the shedding of his blood in the crucifixion,

and the Cross's alternation from this form to being brightly adorned (21b-23) indicates the blessings and salvation which finally come from this sacrifice. This dual image is strengthened by the presence of the five gems "uppe on þam eazlegespanne" (9a), which are generally held to represent the five wounds of Christ,¹⁴³ the source of the blood which appears in that other image of the Cross. On the anagogical level, this alternating vision of the Cross indicates the eternal beatitude which comes from suffering on this earth, just

¹⁴² Fleming, p. 53.

¹⁴³ Gems themselves are associated with divinity, as in Christ II, 694-5, and in Christ III, 1195, Christ is referred to as an "earcnanstan." So in The Blickling Homilies do we read: "He sealde his þone readan gim, þæt was his þæt halige blod" (pp. 9-11), which refers to Christ's sacrifice upon the cross. The image of the cross here would also reflect the physical crosses of the Anglo-Saxon period, which would have appeared with five bosses, also representing the wounds of Christ. For the view, however, that devotion to the five wounds was unlikely in Anglo-Saxon England, see Raw, p. 240.

as the Cross, after narrating its "egeslic wyrd" (74b), tells of its glorification in heaven.

This is particularly significant if we accept Fleming's contention, made in his article already cited, that The Dream of the Rood is a penitential and ascetic document deriving from Anglo-Saxon monasticism. He adopts this notion from Meyer Schapiro, who thus interprets the Ruthwell Cross, on which part of the text of The Dream of the Rood is inscribed in Anglo-Saxon runes, and who contends that seven of the ten panels on the Cross depict examples of the eremitic and monastic ideal.¹⁴⁴ Fleming, and Robert B. Burlin after him,¹⁴⁵ extensively apply this notion to The Dream of the Rood and produce convincing interpretations of the poem in the light of such ascetic ideals, in which the Cross, once again, occupies the central place. Worship of the cross was widespread in Anglo-Saxon England, and praying with arms outstretched was a common penitential practice.¹⁴⁶ This ascetic cross tradition has its primary sources in the New Testament, where Paul says,

Qui autem sunt Christi, carnem suam crucifixerunt cum vitis et concupiscentiis (Gal. 5:24)

and

¹⁴⁴ Meyer Schapiro, "The Religious Meaning of the Ruthwell Cross," Art Bulletin, 26 (1944), 232-45.

¹⁴⁵ Robert B. Burlin, "The Ruthwell Cross, The Dream of the Rood and the Vita Contemplativa," SP, 65 (1968), 23-43.

¹⁴⁶ Cf. Stevens, p. 37; Rahner, "The Christian Mystery," p. 187; and Dölger, "Beiträge," V, pp. 5-10.

Mihi autem absit gloriari, nisi in cruce
Domini nostri Iesu Christi: per quem mihi
mundus crucifixus est, et ego mundo
(Gal. 6:14; cf. Gal. 2:19-20),

and this idea is all based on Jesus' earlier statement
that,

Si quis vult post me venire, abnegat
semetipsum et tollat crucem suam quotidie,
et sequatur me (Lk. 9:23; cf. Mt. 10:38, Mk. 8:34).

Bede, in his interpretation of Mk. 8:34, says that there
are two ways of taking up one's cross and that it is done
by abstinence in the body and by compassion for those
around us. The affliction of the body is the "crux car-
nis," and concern for others is the "crux mentis," and
one thus carries the cross both in one's body and in one's
heart.¹⁴⁷ In terms of our nautical analogy, one must be
"bound to the cross" in this world as Christ/Odysseus is
bound to the mast of the allegorical ship of the Church,
and Burlin sums up the same idea by saying that to gain
salvation, one must participate totally in the death of
Christ, as does the Cross in The Dream of the Rood,
through either literal martyrdom or the ascetic life of
renunciation.¹⁴⁸ In archetypal/mythical terms, rejec-
tion of this world is a rejection of death itself.¹⁴⁹
As an ascetic document, the poem not only sets out to
describe the conversion of the Dreamer, but it also aims

¹⁴⁷ In Marci Evangelium Expositio, ii, 7 (PL, 92, 214-15); cf. In Matthaei Evangelium Expositio, ii, 10 (PL, 92, 56A): "Accipere enim crucem, et post Dominum ire, est abstinenciam carnis vel compassionem proximi aeternae beatitudinis studio exhibere."

¹⁴⁸ Burlin, "The Ruthwell Cross," p. 32.

¹⁴⁹ Kirk, Myth, p. 151.

at the conversion of the reader. The Cross is the focal point of this intention, and Stevens notes the customary use of missionary crosses in Anglo-Saxon times as a place for preaching or in lieu of a church as a place for worship.¹⁵⁰ That Anglo-Saxon missionary zeal should centre on the sign of the cross helps reinforce the role attributable to the Cross in The Dream of the Rood.

The notion of the Cross as a catalyst to conversion is emphasized as well by the Dreamer's fear early in the poem. While describing the alternating vision of the Cross, the Dreamer says, "Eall ic was mid sorgum gedrefed, forht ic was for þære fægran gesyhðe" (20b-21a), and this fear represents the first step in the conversion process. In Ecclus. 1:16 and Ps. 110:10, we find that "infinitum sapientiae timor Domini [est],"¹⁵¹ and the Dreamer fears partly because he does not yet understand what he sees. This dual aspect of the Cross, as the Dreamer sees it, demonstrates in symbolic form the mystery of the redemption and that suffering in this life permits one to rejoice in the hereafter, through the efficacy of Christ's sacrifice, but the Dreamer in his initial state is as yet unable to understand, so consequently he fears. In a similar vein, Luke says of the shepherds that, when told of Christ's birth by the angel, they "timuerunt timore magno" (Lk. 2:9), and fear is also one of the signs of

¹⁵⁰ Stevens, pp. 58-60.

¹⁵¹ The Old English version of this reads:
 þæt byð secga gehwam snytru on frymðe,
 þæt he godes egesan gleawe healde
 (Paris Psalter, 110, 7).

the Last Judgement, as in Lk. 21:26. Isaacs contends, indeed, that the Dreamer's fear of the rood's coming is meant to be analogous to man's fear of Christ's coming,¹⁵² and the poem certainly looks to the Last Days, when all will be made plain. Sin and lack of understanding are, after a manner of speaking, the same thing, and just as the Dreamer, "forwunded mid wommun," does not understand, so in the Old English Daniel is Nebuchadnezzar unable "for fyrenum" (166a) to understand his dream. But fear is a necessary concomitant of the conversion process--the "initium sapientiae"--and this is demonstrated, for example, in Acts 2.

Qui ergo receperunt sermonem eius, baptizati sunt: et appositae sunt in die illa animae circiter tria millia. Erant autem perseverantes in doctrina Apostolorum, et communicatione fractionis panis, et orationibus. Fiebat autem omni animae timor: multa quoque prodigia et signa per Apostolos in Ierusalem fiebant, et metus erat magnus in universis (Acts 2:41-3).

In the verses following, it is said that all those who believed sold their goods and spent their time in worship and preaching, which is ~~similar~~ to the penitential/ascetic ideal promulgated in The Dream of the Rood. The relation of all this to the cross is clear, and in the De doctrina, St. Augustine says that "[Timor Dei] quasi clavatis carnibus omnes superbiae motus ligno crucis affigat."¹⁵³ One must do away with worldly pride before one can conform to the ascetic ideal of The Dream of the Rood, and

¹⁵² Isaacs, Structural Principles, p. 9.

¹⁵³ De doctrina, ii, 7, 9 (PL, 34, 39).

Augustine expresses this in terms of the cross. In the poem, the Dreamer's fear is related to that of the Cross, where the Cross says, echoing the language of line 20b,

Sare ic wæs mid sorgum gedrefed, hnag ic
hwæðre þam secgum to handa,
eaðmod elne mycle (59-60a).

At this point the Cross, like the Dreamer of the opening of the poem, is still in a state of imperfect knowledge and is still "mid strælum forwundod" (62b), and their fear is based on both lack of understanding and consciousness of sin.

The Cross, however, even though it does not yet understand, bows down in humility nonetheless, and we are to take this as a paradigm for the Christian penitent, who must do the same if he is to gain salvation. Humility is the important initial condition necessary for the life of Christian asceticism, and in Christian tradition, the cross is specifically associated with humility. In another relevant passage, similar to that from the De doctrina cited above, Augustine says, "Crux illa signum est humilitatis; ille autem superbia nimia non agnoscit unde sanetur tumor animae ipsius."¹⁵⁴ The relation of the Cross's humility in the poem to the humility which Christ himself demonstrates is reflected in the parallel phrase "elne mycle," since the poet says of Christ going to his crucifixion that he "efstan elne micle" (34a).

Thus, once again, following the example of the Cross re-

154 Enarrationes in Psalmos, cxli, 9 (PL, 37, 1838);
cf. Rabanus Maurus, De laudibus sanctae crucis, i (PL,
107, 173). Both of these are cited in Greenhill, p. 365.

presents participation in the sacrifice of Christ. An interesting analogous use of the word "eifstan" occurs in the second prose homily of the Vercelli Book. There, after describing the terrors of the Last Judgement, the homilist says,

Utan we nu forþan eifstan to Gode, ærþan
us se deað gegripe, forþan he us swiðe to
nea-læceð,¹⁵⁵

and then he goes on to enumerate the ways in which one "hastens to God:"

sien we snotre and soðfæste and mild-
heorte and rumode and riht-wise and
ælmesgeorne and clænheorte and fremsume
and god-wyrhte and larsume and þeowfæste
and ge-hyrsume Gode and urum hlafordum,
and geþyldige Godes willan.

One must thus "hasten to God" as Christ "hastens" to the cross and become, like Christ, a martyr for the faith, although this need not mean literal martyrdom but only such a deadness to the things of this world that one is ready at any moment to die for one's beliefs. Thus Guthlac is referred to as a martyr (Guthlac A, 514), even though he dies in bed, and the Guthlac-poet makes it clear that martyrdom is preeminently a state of mind when he says,

¹⁵⁵ Max Förster, Der Vercelli-Codex CXVII nebst Abdruck einiger altenglischer Homilien der Handschrift (Halle: Max Niemeyer, 1913), p. 79. For the sake of convenience, I have normalized the orthography and expanded the abbreviation for "and." The verb "eifstan" is used elsewhere in Old English to describe those hurrying, like Christ in The Dream of the Rood, to the performance of brave actions. In Genesis A, 2873, it is said of Abraham as he goes to sacrifice Isaac, and in The Battle of Maldon, 206, it refers to the brave soldiers going into battle. In Beowulf, 1493a, the poet says of the hero, hastening to do battle with Grendel's mother, that he "eifste mid elne."

Da was agongen þæt him god wolde
 æfter þrowinga þonc gegyldan
 þæt he martyrhad mode gelufade,
 sealde him snyttru on sefan gehygdum,
 mægenfæste gemynd. (Guthlac A, 470-74)

Jean Daniélou notes the parallelism between the rite of baptism and the theology of martyrdom,¹⁵⁶ and as one battles Satan in the baptismal pool, so is martyrdom conceived of in early Christian thought as a battle with Satan.¹⁵⁷ Thus Guthlac's struggle with the demons is not only an objectivization of his life of martyrdom/renunciation, but it is also a paradigmatic representation of the progress of the Christian soul, whose victory over Satan in the waters of baptism is assured, but who must nevertheless struggle with the demon throughout this earthly life or, metaphorically, in the sea of this world.

The notion of struggle is reflected in The Dream of the Rood in the theme of Christ as warrior, and this is a further parameter used to define the relationship of Christ and the Cross. Not only is this theme a holdover from Germanic paganism, but it is firmly rooted in the Messianic theology of Judaeo-Christianity, and as Rosemary Woolf notes, the vision of Christ as warrior was in no way peculiar to the Anglo-Saxon imagination.¹⁵⁸ In the Old Testament, the Logos/Christ is characterized as

¹⁵⁶ Daniélou, The Bible and the Liturgy, p. 24 et passim.

¹⁵⁷ Cf. Franz Joseph Dölger, "Der Kampf mit dem Ägypter in der Perpetua-Vision: Das Martyrium als Kampf mit dem Teufel," AC, 3 (1932), 177-88.

¹⁵⁸ Woolf, "Doctrinal Influences," p. 144.

a "durus debellator" (Sap. 18:15), and it is commonplace to cite the passage from the Johannine Apocalypse (Apoc. 19:11-16; cf. Apoc. 1:16, 2:16, 6:1-2) in which Christ, mounted on the equus albus, descends from heaven leading his army. Thus, in the same strain, the Apostle Paul can say,

Labora sicut bonus miles Christi Iesu.
Nemo militans Deo implicat se negotiis
saecularibus: ut si placeat, cui se probavit (2 Tim. 2:3-4; cf. 1 Tim. 6:12),

and in accord with this, E.F. Huppé sees both the Cross and Christ in The Dream of the Rood as obedient warriors and suggests that Christ's suffering on the Cross is analogous to that of the warrior who suffers privation in order to win triumph and glory in the end.¹⁵⁹ The Cross tells the Dreamer that it had the power to strike down its enemies, but that it consciously refrained (35-8), since that would have been "ofer dryhtnes word" (35b), and this power of action in the Cross clearly represents the analogous power in Christ. This obedience exemplified in terms of the Cross is once again a paradigm for the Christian reader of the poem, who must similarly obey the word of God and suffer hardship in this life in order to gain eschatological joy.

Thus the Guthlac-poet, in describing Guthlac's strife with the demons, says,

Swa sceal oretta a in his mode

¹⁵⁹ Huppé, The Web of Words, pp. 103-04. For the view that Christ is a warrior and the Cross his weapon, see Michael D. Cherniss, "The Cross as Christ's Weapon: The Influence of Heroic Literary Tradition on The Dream of the Rood," ASE, 2 (1973), 241-52.

Ongyrede hine þa geong hæleð, (þæt wæs
god ælmihtig),
strang ond stiðmod. Gestah he on gealgan
heanne,
modig on manigra gesyhðe, þa he wolde man-
cyn lysan (39-41).

160 Carol Jean Wolf, "Christ as Hero in The Dream of the Rood," NM, 71 (1970), pp. 205-06.

the prelapsarian Eden, and as Adam and Eve sought clothes after their defeat in sin, so does Christ, casting off his clothes, conquer.¹⁶¹ St. Augustine states that the nakedness of Noah, similarly, is a figure of Christ's passion, and that Noah was naked in his own house signifies that Christ would be crucified among his own people, the Jews,¹⁶² and the association of Adam, Noah, and Christ is commonplace. In archetypal terms, "all ritual nudity implies an atemporal model, a paradisal image."¹⁶³ Being clothed by God is a recurring characteristic of eternal life (cf., for example, 4 Esdras 2:39-40), and in early Judaeo-Christian legends of the ascent of the soul, a change in garments--trading earthly clothes for heavenly--is necessary before the soul may enter the highest heaven.¹⁶⁴ The specific relation of the crucifixion in all this is reflected in the widespread practice of placing the sign of the cross on baptismal garments, monks' habits, and the clothes of Christians generally.¹⁶⁵

¹⁶¹ On this theme generally, see Daniélou, The Bible and the Liturgy, pp. 37-40, 49-52. See also Ambrose, Expositio in Lucam, x, 110 (PL, 15, 1924C), cited in translation in Michael J.B. Allen and Daniel G. Calder, Sources and Analogues of Old English Poetry: The Major Latin Texts in Translation (Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 1976), p. 58; Patten, "Structure and Meaning in The Dream of the Rood," p. 398; and Lee, Guest-Hall, p. 62.

¹⁶² De civitate Dei, xvi, 2 (PL, 41, 477-8).

¹⁶³ Eliade, The Sacred and the Profane, p. 135.

¹⁶⁴ See W. Bousset, "Die Himmelfahrt der Seele," ARW, 4 (1901), p. 141 et passim. For Lévi-Strauss, Structural Anthropology, p. 225, garments in primitive society are the mediation between nature and culture. Here they are the mediation between humanity and divinity.

¹⁶⁵ Dölger, "Beiträge," VIII, pp. 34-42.

When Christ embraces the Cross in the line following (42a), this heightens the identity of Christ and Cross in the poem. Clemoes suggests that this action reflects the Germanic ideal, and that the embrace of lord and followers was part of the heroic convention, in support of which assertion he cites The Wanderer, 41-4.¹⁶⁶ The Cross trembles when Christ embraces it, and this suggests the act of love and indicates "how in Christ the polarities of warrior and lover are combined."¹⁶⁷ This is related to the notion that the marriage of Christ and the Church took place on the cross, a concept which we will discuss more fully in a later context.¹⁶⁸ The relation of Christ and the Cross, however, is not merely one of lord and faithful retainer or that of two lovers, but it is also possible to see the Cross as the "bana" of his lord. This could then be another element of the guilt which the Cross feels and shares with the Dreamer, the poet, and by extension all mankind. The Cross, the Dreamer, and all men are "synnum fah," since just as the Cross has betrayed Christ by becoming his "bana," so have all men betrayed Christ by sinning, an idea which the poet of the Old English Christ III, referring to Hebrews 6:6, expresses thus:

For hwon ahenge þu mec hefgor on þinra honda
rode

¹⁶⁶ Peter Clemoes, Rhythm and Cosmic Order in Old English Christian Literature (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970), pp. 10-11. See also Wolf, "Christ as Hero," p. 203.

¹⁶⁷ Huppé, The Web of Words, p. 88.

¹⁶⁸ See below, pp. 199-200.

for mancynnes manegum synnum
ond Adomes ealdgewyrhtum.
Deað he þær byrigde, hwæðere eft dryhten aras
mid his miclan mihte mannum to helpe (97b-102).

Although the statement "Deað he þær byrigde" can only refer grammatically here to Christ, it also implies Adam's act in the Fall. Both "tasted death," the latter in atonement for the former, and such an expression undoubtedly has its source in Hebrews 2:9, where the Apostle Paul says that Christ "pro omnibus gustaret mortem." The comparison of Adam and Christ has its origins in Pauline typology, and it is a commonplace in the Fathers to refer to Adam as the figure or anti-type of Christ.¹⁶⁹ Both Adam and Christ are the sons of God, and as Adam is the first man, thaumaturgically born of the virgin earth, so is Christ, born of the Virgin Mary, the first man of God's New Creation. Similarly, both were venerated by the wild animals, indicating the original harmony of the prelapsarian Eden, which is restored in Christ, and the temptation of Christ is a sequel to and recapitulation of the temptation of Adam. A further correspondence is between the somnus Adae, from which Eve, the mother of all men, was created, and the sleep of Christ, from whose side on the cross the

¹⁶⁹ Cf. Ambrose, PL, 15, 1611; PL, 17, 98, 813; Jerome, PL, 22, 1101; Augustine, PL, 33, 684; PL, 36, 461; PL, 37, 1381. For the expression of this notion in Pauline typology, see Rom. 5:12-21 and 1 Cor. 15:21-2, 45-9. See also J. Jeremias, "Der Ursprung der Typologie Adam-Christus," in Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament, ed. Gerhard Kittel (Stuttgart: 1949-50), I, 142-3, and Immanuel Löw, "Die Erde als jungfräuliche Mutter Adams," ZNTW, 11 (1910), 168. For a discussion of this theme as it relates to The Dream of the Rood, see Patten, "Structure and Meaning," pp. 397-8, and Louis H. Leiter, "The Dream of the Rood: Patterns of Transformation," in Old English Poetry: Fifteen Essays, ed. Robert P. Creed (Providence: Brown University Press, 1967), pp. 98-108.

Church, the mother of all Christians, was born.¹⁷⁰ Augustine further says that the creation of the earth itself was a figure of the formation of the Church.¹⁷¹ The Cross's symbolic role in this association is that as Adam "tasted death" by eating of the fruit of the forbidden tree, so did Christ "taste death" on the tree of the Cross, and the lignum vitae in the Garden of Eden was a commonly acknowledged figure for the Cross. In the Adamic typology of Clement of Alexandria, Adam's bonds of sin are analogous to the bonds of flesh which Christ took on in order to liberate all mankind,¹⁷² and this is again paradigmatic for the development in The Dream of the Rood, in which, as Christ is crucified and resurrected, so are both the Cross and the Dreamer released from their bonds of sin and brought to the contemplation of eschatological joy.

The other side of the Adam/Christ typology is the notion of Mary as the new Eve, and St. Augustine says, "Corrupto animo feminae ingressus est morbus; integro corpore feminae processit salus."¹⁷³ Just as Eve, the

¹⁷⁰ On the typological significance of the somnus Adae, see Daniélou, From Shadows to Reality, pp. 48-9. For the Church as the mother of us all, see Augustine, Confessiones, i, 11, 17 (PL, 32, 669).

¹⁷¹ Confessiones, xiii, 12, 13 (PL, 32, 850).

¹⁷² Cf. Protrepticus, ix, 3, 1-2; cited in Daniélou, Gospel Message and Hellenistic Culture, p. 184.

¹⁷³ De doctrina, i, 14, 13 (PL, 34, 24). For more on the Mary/Eve typology, see W. Staerck, "Eva-Maria: Ein Beitrag zur Denk- und Sprechweise der altkirchlichen Christologie," ZNTW, 33 (1934), 97-104, Daniélou, From Shadows to Reality, pp. 43-6, Hilda C. Graef, "The Theme of the Second Eve in Some Byzantine Sermons on the Assump-

personification of foolishness, believed the serpent, so does Mary, who is true wisdom, believe the angel Gabriel, and whereas one brings sin into the world by eating of the forbidden fruit, the other brings salvation into the world by the fruit of her womb. In the Old English Christ I, Mary openly acknowledges her relation to Eve:

Forþan þæt monnum nis
cuð geryne, ac Crist onwrah
in Dauides dyrrre mægan
þæt is Euan scyld eal forpynded,
wærgða aworpen, ond gewuldrad is
se heanra had (94b-99a),

and in Genesis B, although Eve is described as being fair (cf. 626-7), much as Mary and all the female saints of Anglo-Saxon poetry are fair, she is nonetheless said to have been created with a "wacran hige" (590b-91a; cf. 649). As Eve is the spouse of Adam, so is Mary the bride of Christ (cf. Christ I, 280-81), and as such, she is metaphorically related to the Church, since it is the marriage of Christ and the Church which took place on the cross. Mary and the Church were often treated as being equivalent, and as Mary gave birth to Christ, so does the Church give birth to the Christian in baptism.¹⁷⁴ The relation of Church, Christ, Mary, and Eve is already

tion," Studia Patristica, 9 (1966), 224-30, and Ernst Guldan, Eva und Maria: Eine Antithese als Bildmotiv (Graz-Köln: Verlag Hermann Böhlau's Nachfolger, 1966). For a discussion of this theme as it relates to The Dream of the Rood, see Huppé, The Web of Words, pp. 100-02.

¹⁷⁴ See A. Müller, Ecclesia-Maria: Die Einheit Mariens und der Kirche (Freiburg-i-d-Schweiz: 1951), Rahner, Greek Myths, pp. 162-3, and A.D. Horgan, "The Dream of the Rood and Christian Tradition," NM, 79 (1978), pp. 17-18.

clear in the New Testament, and Paul, speaking to the members of the Church at Corinth, says,

aemulor enim vos Dei aemulatione. Despondi enim vos uni viro virginem castam exhibere Christo. Timeo autem ne sicut serpens Evam seduxit astutia sua, ita corrumpantur sensus vestri, et excidant a simplicitate, quae est in Christo (2 Cor. 11:2-3).

He does not want them to be deceived as Eve was deceived, and Eve is the anti-type of both Mary and the Church. Such mystical marriages as that of Christ and the Church are commonplace in pre-Christian Jewish thought, and in the Old Testament, Israel is described as the spouse of Yahweh (Hosea 2:16-23) and Jerusalem is described as a bride (4 Esdras 7:26). By a similar token, Zion is the mother of all men (4 Esdras 10:7), and in the Johannine Apocalypse, the New Jerusalem is the Bride of the Lamb (Apoc. 21:9-10).

In The Dream of the Rood, the Cross explicitly associates itself with Mary,

Hwæt, me þa geweorðode wuldres ealdor
ofer holmwudu, heofonrices weard!
Swylce swa he his modor eac, Marian sylfe,
ælmhtig god for ealle menn
geweorðode ofer eall wifa cynn (90-94),

and the Cross, like Mary, helps further the work of redemption in this world. In addition, the implicit contrast of Eve and Mary in the poem provides yet another parallel for the development of the Cross. Eve sinned, but Mary is glorified; the Cross is "synnum fah," but is finally glorified as well. We have already noted the association of Mary with the Cross in Elene, where those who worship the Cross in this life will come to be with

the Blessed Virgin in heaven (Elene, 1228-35),¹⁷⁵ and in the charm For Unfruitful Land, Mary and the cross are invoked side by side. In the same poem, however, the Earth-goddess is also invoked, and it is a commonplace to remark the fertility associations of Mary and to note that the myth of the Blessed Virgin is related to those of Danae, Melanippe, Auge, Antiope, Isis, and to others of the same sort.¹⁷⁶ The tree of life, which in a Christian context is identical with the cross, is commonly associated with such figures,¹⁷⁷ and Ambrose interprets the tree of Psalm 1:3 as the humanity of Christ, which was planted in the womb of the virgin.¹⁷⁸ The association of Mary, the mother of Christ, with the virgin earth, which is the mother of Adam, takes on a broader significance as both are the source of all living things, and their relationship parallels that of Adam as the father of all men and Christ as the father of all men's souls. The notion of men as having been born of earth is universal, and it is interesting that the earth was said to have been the mother of Þórr, Christ's greatest competitor in the early days of northern Christianity.¹⁷⁹ In 4 Esdras 5:48, the earth is similarly referred to as a

¹⁷⁵ See above, pp. 178-79.

¹⁷⁶ Bickerman, "Symbolism in the Dura Synagogue," pp. 149-50; Frazer, p. 445; Graves, The White Goddess, p. 473 et passim. The other side of this association is the notion of Christ as Dionysian king, responsible for all fertility.

¹⁷⁷ Eliade, Patterns, p. 285.

¹⁷⁸ Enarrationes in Psalmos, i, 35 (PL, 14, 984).

¹⁷⁹ Turville-Petre, Myth and Religion of the North, p. 97.

womb, and it is important that the idea of return to the womb is an integral part of the process of primitive initiation. Whoever is baptized in Christ is therefore "renatus" (Jn. 3:3), and this is directly related to the birth of the "second Adam" through Mary. The tree of Psalm 1:3 refers not only to the humanity of Christ, planted in the womb of the virgin, but also to the cross itself, and in a Pseudo-Augustinian sermon we read, "per signum crucis in utero sanctae Matris Ecclesiae concepti estis."¹⁸⁰ In archetypal terms, the quaternity is represented in the four spatial extensions of the cross, of which three elements are made up of the three spiritus of the Trinity, and the fourth constituent is somaton, earth or body, often symbolized as a virgin.¹⁸¹

The Cross in The Dream of the Rood, in comparing itself with Mary, says that it is honored "ofer holmwudu" (91a), and this implies the raising of the Cross as mast over the metaphorical ship of the Church, since "holmwudu" can easily be read as "ship." Leiter suggests that many of the words for "cross" in the poem--such as "beam" (6a, 97b), "wudu" (97b), and "sigebeam" (127a)--can also be read as "ship," and that "gestigan" (34b) can mean not only "mount" but also "go on board."¹⁸² This is

¹⁸⁰ PL, 40, 659D; cited in Rahner, "The Christian Mystery," p. 203.

¹⁸¹ Jung, Psychology and Religion, pp. 37-8, 62-3.

¹⁸² Leiter, "Patterns of Transformation," pp. 110-11. The interpretation of the word "holmwudu" has always posed a problem for Dream of the Rood criticism. Not until P.B. Taylor, "Text and Texture in The Dream of the Rood," NM, 75 (1974), pp. 199-201, does anyone seem to

all consistent with the common patristic idea that entrance into the ark was a figure for the fastening of Christ on the cross, and the ark, which is the Church, was held to be the maternal womb for the coming race.¹⁸³ Thus the womb of the Church is analogous to the womb of Mary, and both the Church and Mary, through their relationship with Christ, especially as mediated here in the symbolism of the Cross, bring forth the Christian into new life. The Church and Mary are not the only brides of Christ, but on a more tropological level, so is the individual soul, and we all marry Christ, through the crucifixion, in order to bring forth good fruit unto God (cf. Rom. 7:1-4). This is affirmed in the Eucharist, which may be spoken of as a mystic marriage between Christ and the soul.¹⁸⁴ For the Dreamer, this indicates both his membership in the Church universal and his hopes for eschatological joy, and these hopes are reflected through the Dreamer to the penitential reader of

have realized the full extent of the relationship of this crux to the metaphor of the ship of the Church, even though R.E. Kaske, "A Poem of the Cross in the Exeter Book: Riddle 60 and The Husband's Message," Traditio, 23 (1967), pp. 64-7, was certainly on the right track when he pointed out the implicit associations of "holmwudu" with the tree of life standing by the waters in Paradise. The most recent interpretation of this crux is that of T.E. Pickford, "Holmwudu in The Dream of the Rood," NM, 77 (1976), 561-4, who contends that the word should be read "helmwudu," due to the apparent confusion of helm and holm in three other places in the Vercelli Book. Such a view is interesting but unlikely.

¹⁸³ Rahner, "Die Arche Noe," pp. 139, 164; cf. Kirk, Myth, p. 200.

¹⁸⁴ Cf. Daniélou, The Bible and the Liturgy, p. 205.

the poem whose conversion is here sought after. This theme of marriage is an important one in Old English and is perhaps most clearly expressed in Juliana, where, rather than marry the pagan Eleusius, Juliana prefers to remain a virgin, faithful to Christ. The contrast is between earthly marriage and heavenly, and Eleusius's anger is based in part on his simple failure to understand, much as in Christ I Joseph is unable to understand the divine mystery which informs the pregnancy of Mary.¹⁸⁵

The "tasting of death" association of Adam and Christ not only indicates their relationship, but is tied as well to the important theme of feasting in the poem, and this image is reflected in the Cross's description of the Last Judgement, when Christ will ask,

se ðe for dryhtnes naman hwær se man sie,
 biiteres onbyrgan, deaðes wolde
 swa he ær on ðam beame dyde
 (112b-14).

Thus the penitent reader of the poem is once again to participate in the death of Christ, through the ascetic life of martyrdom. The ultimate consummation of this "tasting of death," as it is performed by both Adam and Christ and must yet be performed by the Christian penitent, is in the final eschatological feast, which is the reward for such earthly suffering and abstinence,

dream on heofonum, þær is blis mycel,
 geseted to symle, þær is dryhtnes folc
 þær is singal blis (139b-41),

¹⁸⁵ On Joseph's failure to understand, see Earl R. Anderson, "Mary's Role as Eiron in Christ I," JEGP, 70 (1971), 230-40.

and we have already discussed the contrast between earthly and heavenly feasting in our chapter preceding.¹⁸⁶

An interesting adjunct to this theme in the poem is that of "fruit." Adam "tasted death" by eating of the forbidden fruit, and the tree in the garden is figurally related to the cross, upon which Christ, the fruit of Mary's womb, was crucified. Not only is Christ the suffering, sacred king, upon whose sacrifice the well-being of nature depends, but he is himself the "vitis vera" of Jn. 15:1-12, and John is able to say metaphorically of Christ's death and resurrection,

Amen, amen dico vobis, nisi granum frumenti cadens in terram, mortuum fuerit, ipsum solum manet: si autem mortuum fuerit, multum fructum affert (Jn. 12:24-5).

We have spoken above of the tradition of Christ as both a tree and the less generalized lignum vitae,¹⁸⁷ and he is also referred to variously as flos, flos Mariae, malus inter ligna, virga, and as fructus.¹⁸⁸ This is all related to the notion of the cross as tree, and the tree in the De Pascha of St. Cyprian represents at once the cross, Christ, and the Church. Similarly, Paul describes the Church as an olive tree (Rom. 11:17-24), and so is Israel

¹⁸⁶ See above, pp. 125-30.

¹⁸⁷ See above, pp. 142-4.

¹⁸⁸ For Christ as flos, see Gregory, PL, 79, 494; Rabanus Maurus, PL, 112, 929. For Christ as the flos Mariae, see Ambrose, PL, 15, 1561. For Christ as the malus inter ligna, see Gregory, PL, 79, 486. For Christ as virga, see Hilary, PL, 9, 283; Jerome, PL, 25, 462; Augustine, PL, 40, 698; Alcuin, PL, 100, 1109. For Christ as fructus, see Tertullian, PL, 2, 788; Gregory, PL, 76, 938; Rabanus Maurus, PL, 112, 931.

described in the Old Testament (cf. Jer. 11:16, Hos. 14:6). By extension, men also are trees, and we have already cited this tradition in classical and early Christian times.¹⁸⁹ Thus does Ambrose, referring to Cant. 5:1, say,

Lignum aridum factus eras in Adam: sed
nunc per gratiam Christi pomiferae ar-
bores pullulatis.¹⁹⁰

This same metaphor of men as fruit-bearing trees is used in the New Testament, when Christ warns against false prophets (Mt. 7:15-20) and concludes by saying (v. 20), "ex fructibus eorum cognoscetis eos," and Paul, when speaking of sin, says,

Quem ergo fructum habuistis tunc in illis,
in quibus nunc erubescitis? Nam finis
illorum mors est. Nunc vero liberati a
peccato, servi autem facti Deo, habetis
fructum vestrum in sanctificationem, finem
vero vitam aeternam (Rom. 6:21-2).

So does the author of Ecclesiasticus compare men to fruit trees (Ecclus. 27:6-7) and remark that a tree's fruit shows how it has been cultivated. To extend the metaphor, St. Augustine says that the fruit of the trees in Paradise represents both the customs of the godly and the works of the saints,¹⁹¹ and that the fruits of the earth signify and allegorically prefigure opera misericordiae.¹⁹² The eschatological expression of this metaphor of good works as fruits is that the faithful--those who

¹⁸⁹ See above, pp. 140-42.

¹⁹⁰ De sacramentis, v, 3, 14 (PL, 16, 468C).

¹⁹¹ De civitate Dei, xiii, 21 (PL, 41, 394-5).

¹⁹² Confessiones, xiii, 25, 38 (PL, 32, 862).

have performed good works in this life--will eat of the tree of life in Paradise, to which they are themselves, as trees, analogous. The Cross, which prefigures the tree of life, is once again the symbolic focus, and as it developed from a mere tree "holtes on ende" to an object of glorification, so does this outline the possibilities for mankind. The means by which one moves up in the progression is by acquiring wisdom, and the notion of the Cross as lignum vitae is especially relevant here, since wisdom itself "lignum vitae est his qui apprehenderint eam" (Prov. 3:18), and Alcuin says, along similar lines, "lignum vitae sapientia Dei Patris est."¹⁹³ In Proverbs we also find that "Fructus iusti lignum vitae, et qui suscipit animas sapiens est" (Prov. 11:30), so in some sense it is possible to say that "qui suscipit animas, lignum vitae est," and this is a paradigm for the entire symbolic configuration of the poem. The purpose of the Cross in coming to the Dreamer is to "win souls," first by converting the Dreamer, and then by converting others through the vehicle of the Dreamer. The Dreamer in turn, as he assumes the responsibilities laid on him by the Cross, will "win souls," and thereby become himself a lignum vitae--a tree which symbolically brings forth good fruit. This theme is tied in two ways to the main image of Christ in the poem. First, he is himself both a tree, associated with the Cross, and the fruit of Mary's womb, and secondly, he is the wisdom being preached, or

¹⁹³ Commentarii in Apocalypsin, ii, 2, 7 (PL, 100, 1103A).

as Augustine puts it, Christ is the "sapientia Dei ubique praesans."¹⁹⁴ This image is summed up in the Cross, which was once literally a tree, and it is up to the reader of the poem not only to venerate the Cross and learn by its example, but to become himself a lignum vitae and bring forth good fruit. The pursuit of wisdom is of all-embracing importance, and the author of *Sapientia* states that both Adam and Noah were saved by wisdom (Sap. 10:1-4). This is important in the context of The Dream of the Rood, where the comparison of Adam and Christ, the latter of whom is himself true wisdom, is made and where the metaphor of the ship of the Church, which is analogous to the ark, is implied. Of Noah in particular, it is said that he was saved "per contemp-
tibile lignum" (v. 4), and this reflects the duality in the poem between the Cross as mere tree "holtes on ende" and the Cross as glorified object of veneration. Mary as well was traditionally associated with wisdom, and Graves cites the prayer from the Litany of the Blessed Virgin which begins, "Sedes sapientiae, ora pro nobis."¹⁹⁵ Impious men, by contrast, make light of wisdom, and their labors are "sine fructu" (Sap. 3:11; cf. 4:5).

This theme of fruit leads to the more general consideration of nature itself. Huppé notes that the Cross as tree is able to share in the sympathy of nature, but that at the same time it is above nature,¹⁹⁶ and the

¹⁹⁴ In Joannis Evangelium, xxxv, 4 (PL, 35, 1659).

¹⁹⁵ Graves, The White Goddess, p. 255.

¹⁹⁶ Huppé, The Web of Words, p. 90.

Cross's identity with Christ in the poem calls up once again the notion of Christ as suffering, sacred king, who controls the forces of nature. On the sympathy of nature, the Cross says,

Geseah ic weruda god
 pearle benian. Pystro hæfdon
 bewrigen mid wolcnum wealdendes hræw,
 scirne sciman, sceadu forðeode,
 wann under wolcnum. Weop eal gesceaft,
 cwiðdon cyninges fyll. Crist was on rode (51b-56).

Sawyer, referring to the New Testament crucifixion scenes, rightly states that darkness is a conventional concomitant of divine intervention, and citing the similar example of Ex. 10:22, he says that the darkness at the crucifixion therefore signals Christ's exodus. The coming of darkness, as well, was part of the literary convention of the first centuries to communicate the belief that God was in Christ.¹⁹⁷ The cloud, however, as we have shown, was also a commonplace of divine protection, and the poet of The Dream of the Rood states that darkness covered the Lord's body with a cloud. Even in the crucifixion, Christ is "protected," and the presence of this "cloud" indicates by one more sign the invulnerability of the divine Christ, even though it at first appears that he has been vanquished. Traditionally, Christ ascended to heaven in a cloud,¹⁹⁸ and so also will he come in a cloud at the Last Judgement.¹⁹⁹

¹⁹⁷ John F.A. Sawyer, "Why is a Solar Eclipse Mentioned in the Passion Narrative (Luke XXIII.44-5)?" JTS, n.s. 23 (1972), p. 125.

¹⁹⁸ Cf. Acts 1:9, Christ II, 527-29b, and Blickling Homilies, p. 121.

¹⁹⁹ Cf. Blickling Homilies, p. 123.

In Christ III, we have another description of the sympathy of nature at the crucifixion (1127-86), and here again it is significant to note that an account of the crucifixion appears in a poem on the Last Judgement, since by the efficacy of the former are we saved at the latter. We also find, analogously, that at the Last Judgement earth will tremble (Christ III, 881b) and all creation will resound (930). The Christ-poet says, as well, that the sap of the trees turned to blood at the crucifixion,

Ða wearð beam monig blodigum tearum
birunnen under rindum, reade ond picce;
sæp wearð to swate (1174-76a),

and this is no doubt based, as Cook points out,²⁰⁰ on 4 Esdras 5:5, where it is said that blood shall trickle out of the wood in the Last Days. The eschatological role of trees can also be seen in the Messianic theology of the Old Testament, and of the Last Days it is said, "Tunc laudabunt ligna saltus coram Domino: Quia venit iudicare terram" (1 Chr. 16:33). The sympathy of nature with divine suffering is similarly reflected in Andreas, 1441-9, where the poet says that blossoming groves and bright flowers grew up on the spot where the saint had shed his blood, and Andreas's suffering is clearly meant to be a reflection in microcosm of the suffering of Jesus. This sympathy of nature at the death of a hero goes on to

²⁰⁰ Cook, The Christ of Cynewulf, p. 200. See also Epistle of Barnabas, 12, 1, cited in Daniélou, Theology of Jewish Christianity, p. 103. In this latter passage, analogously to Dream of the Rood, 59b, it is said that the tree shall bend down and stand upright.

become a conventional topos of the medieval epic, and one could cite examples from the Slovo o polku Igoreve, the Chanson de Roland, Óláfs saga helga, and Beowulf.²⁰¹

Dickins and Ross further note the analogy of all creation weeping at the death of Baldr and say that this correspondence "cannot be due to chance."²⁰² A further parallel from Old Norse is that Yggdrasil will tremble at the end of time (cf. Völuspá, 47), and this reminds one of the trembling/steadfast Cross in The Dream of the Rood. Yggdrasil is indeed closely related to the Cross--like the Cross in Christian conception it is the "æðstr viða," the best of trees (Grímnismál, 44), and like the Cross in The Dream of the Rood, it suffers more than men know (Grímnismál, 35).²⁰³

The eschatological thrust of The Dream of the Rood is reinforced by the night time-scheme of the poem. Night is a time traditionally associated with the Last Days, and Canuteson points out the relevance in this connection of 1 Thess. 5:2.²⁰⁴ Similarly, in Christ III,

²⁰¹ See Slovo, 561-2, Óláfs saga helga, ch. 235, Beowulf, 3143-55, and William Calin, ed., La Chanson de Roland (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1968), II. 1423-37.

²⁰² Bruce Dickins and Alan S.C. Ross, eds., The Dream of the Rood, 4th ed. (London: Methuen, 1954), pp. 27-8.

²⁰³ The relevant portion of the Icelandic text reads:
 Askir Yggdrasils
 drýgir erfiði
 meira en menn um viti.

²⁰⁴ John Canuteson, "The Crucifixion and the Second Coming in The Dream of the Rood," MP, 66 (1969), p. 294. This image also occurs in 2 Pet. 3:10 and Apoc. 3:3. Compare as well the parable of the ten virgins in Mt. 25.

869a, judgement comes "æt midre niht." Before one comes to the Last Judgement, one must be converted, and the night-dream is an important means to this end, as we find in the Book of Job.

Per somnium, in visione nocturna, Quando
irruit sopor super homines, Et dormiunt in
lectulo, Tunc aperit aures virorum, Et
erudiens eos instruit disciplina, Ut aver-
tat hominem ab his quae facit, Et liberet
eum de superbia (Job 33:15-17).

This passage is of particular importance because the opening lines of The Dream of the Rood seem here to be a conscious echo of the language of the Vulgate. So also does Constantine's dream in Elene (69-98) constitute the beginning of his conversion as well as of the progressive conversions which control the poem. Augustine similarly describes his conversion as a falling asleep and waking unto God--

consopita est insania mea: et evigilavi in
te, et vidi te infinitum aliter; et visus
iste non a carne trahebatur²⁰⁵--

and this points out the potential for the Dreamer. The association of both Christ and the Cross with night-- Christ is born at night, and as the Cross comes to the Dreamer "to midre niht," so will Christ come to judge mankind "sicut fur in nocte"--emphasizes by contrast the fact that both are come with the specific purpose of bringing light into the world. In the poem, the Cross is "leohte bewunden" (5b), and this is the objective reflection of the Cross's role as the dispenser of the light of knowledge. Furthermore, the contrast between the brightly

²⁰⁵ Confessiones, vii, 14, 20 (PL, 32, 744).

shining Cross and the Dreamer lying in darkness is purposely designed to emphasize their differences of status and to point out the long way which the Christian penitent must travel in order to reach exaltation. Yet at the same time, there is hope for such a Christian penitent, since the Cross was at one time in a position of both physical and spiritual darkness not far removed from that of the Dreamer. In the Heavenly City, all will be perpetual light in the presence of God (cf. Apoc. 22:5), and this is the state to which Christ and the Cross will lead us, toward which the Christian reader of the poem must strive.

Not only is the Cross temporally all-embracing, as we have seen, but it is spatially all-embracing as well. When the Dreamer first sees the Cross, it is stretching to the "foldan sceatum" (8a), which as H.R. Patch contends, is best rendered as "the corners of the earth,"²⁰⁶ and this represents Christ's embracing of all mankind. Leiter states that the word "lædan" in line 5 has the secondary meaning of "stretching," and he similarly concludes that the reading is symbolic.²⁰⁷ In the Cross's description of the crucifixion, the phrase "Geseah ic weruda god pearle penian" (51b-52a) is clearly relevant, for the stretching of the Cross about the earth reflects as well Christ's torment upon the Cross. These images combine to emphasize the universal importance of Christ's

²⁰⁶ Howard R. Patch, "Liturgical Influence in The Dream of the Rood," PMLA, 34 (1919), p. 246.

²⁰⁷ Leiter, "Patterns of Transformation," p. 106.

sacrifice. The Cross starts out in one finite, clearly defined location--"holtes on ende"--and then through the course of its development grows to a largeness which reflects the all-embracing infinitude of God, and which, at the same time, indicates the growth which is possible to man. In Christ III, people will come from "foldan sceatum" at the Last Judgement (878), and this defines the extent of Christ's power. Therefore, when Satan is cast down "under foldan sceatas" (Solomon and Saturn, 459b), the phrase is meant to indicate that Satan is no longer in the realm of God's jurisdiction and that he can no longer partake of the joys of men nor have any hope for salvation. Similarly, in Christ III, the army of the sinful will fall "under foldan sceat" into the "deaðsele deofles" (1530-39a), and this is only another way of saying that they no longer have any part in the divine plan.

This expansive vision of the Cross in The Dream of the Rood reflects the common patristic tradition of the cosmic cross, which is based on the allegorical interpretation of Ephesians 3:17-18:

Christum habitare per fidem in cordibus
vestris: in charitate radicati, et fun-
dati, ut possitis comprehendere cum omni-
bus sanctis, quae sit latitudo, et longi-
tudo, et sublimitas, et profundum.

In the four dimensions here enumerated, the early Christian exegete saw the four dimensions of the cross, and these four extensions into space were held to be equivalent to the four dimensions of the cosmos.²⁰⁸ The

²⁰⁸ Greenhill, "The Child in the Tree," pp. 357-60 et passim.

Fathers of the Eastern Church especially, believed the cross here to be analogous to the Platonic World-Soul, which existed in the heavens in the form of a chi;²⁰⁹ so Christ, hanging on the cross, recapitulates in himself the entire universe. To Gregory of Nyssa, the cosmological cross represents the power of God in the four spatial extensions of the world, and he says that Christ harmonized the universe even through the form of his death.²¹⁰ Greenhill notes that this cosmic cross was visualized either as retaining its cross shape or as a giant fruit tree, planted on earth and having its fruit in the heavens.²¹¹ Christ and the cross are identical and co-extensive, and Christ's analogous cosmic extensiveness is indicated in the Messianic theology of the Old Testament. Speaking of the Logos/Christ, the author of *Sapientia* says that he "usque ad caelum attingebat stans in terra" (Sap. 18:16). Much more importantly, Christ draws the elect into heaven from his position on the cross, and the cross is the means by which one is able to ascend.²¹² Thus in the De Pascha (64-6), ascent to heaven is possible through the central tree which symbolizes

²⁰⁹ Bousset, "Platons Weltseele," *passim*.

²¹⁰ Cf. Gerhart B. Ladner, "St. Gregory of Nyssa and St. Augustine on the Symbolism of the Cross," in Late Classical and Mediaeval Studies in Honor of Albert Mathias Friend, Jr., ed. Kurt Weitzmann (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1955), pp. 88-9.

²¹¹ Greenhill, p. 331. We have already spoken of the cross as tree in our discussion above.

²¹² Bousset, "Platons Weltseele," p. 283; Greenhill, p. 329 et passim.

at once Christ, Cross, and Church, and at the base of which all men stand (30ff.), and Rabanus Maurus, in his De laudibus sanctae crucis, perhaps best summarizes this tradition: "Crux Christi via est justorum, ascensus ad coelum, rota de infimis ad superiora nos trahens, dux et janua regni, victoria nostra."²¹³

Like the Cross, wisdom also stretches from one end of the earth to the other (cf. Sap. 8:1), and this is similarly important in the context of The Dream of the Rood, where coming to heaven is based on the acquisition of wisdom through the teaching of the Cross. As Christ's power, symbolized in the spatial extension of the Cross, is universal, so is wisdom or the "light of Christ" universal, and only by the attainment of wisdom can one come to the eschatological joy which is made possible through Christ's "stretching" on the Cross. This is related, once again, to the implicit metaphor in the poem of the ship of the Church, which is the vehicle as well by which this wisdom is dispensed. In the Origenian exegesis of the second century, furthermore, the ark travelling through the world in all four directions was said to have made the sign of the cross.²¹⁴ Lastly, St. Augustine gives a moral and spiritual interpretation to the notion of the cosmic cross described in Eph. 3:18 and says that the four extensions of the cross represent the four aspects of charity²¹⁵ and finally that "Quo signo crucis,

²¹³ De laudibus sanctae crucis, ii, 17 (PL, 107, 282C); cited in Greenhill, p. 351.

²¹⁴ See Rahner, "Die Arche Noe," p. 159.

²¹⁵ See Ladner, pp. 90-1, and Greenhill, p. 359.

omnis actio christiana describitur."²¹⁶

A tension inevitably develops "between word and meaning, between the slightness of the visible and the awful power of the invisible."²¹⁷ The Cross itself is so insubstantial, yet it is both temporally and spatially all-embracing in the poem. Just as the Bible teleologically centres around Christ, so does the poem centre about the Cross as a surrogate for Christ, and the Cross becomes the symbolic focus and expression of the whole concept of atonement. As our last chapter came to a head in the baptismal pool, so here is all Christian experience summed up in the salvific power of the Cross. It is the "beacen," the fixed point, which seafarers on the sea of this world can look to as a foreshadowing of that which is to come. It is typologically related to the tree of life in Paradise, and only in Paradise is there the true stasis which the Cross represents on earth. There, the potential will have become the actual, and "Primum enim caelum, et prima terra abiit, et mare iam non est" (Apoc. 21:1).

²¹⁶ De doctrina, ii, 41, 62 (PL, 34, 64).

²¹⁷ Rahner, Greek Myths, p. 72.

Chapter Four

Cosmogonic Myth

and the Theme of the Homeland

The abolition of the sea in the New Jerusalem is a significant metaphor for the transcendence of postlapsarian mortality, and the fact that the allegorical Land of the Phoenix was unaffected by the Deluge (Phoenix, 41-6) demonstrates this quite clearly. So also, the homilist of the Blickling Book tells us that in the heavenly kingdom there will be "ne wind, ne gewenn, ne wætres sweg."¹ The sea and the rain fulfil themselves in the production of earthly vegetation, of which the cross is the highest expression, but this also is only another stage in the progressive regeneration provided for in the plan of redemption. What follows is the return to Paradise itself, and the cross is only the type of the tree of life in the Heavenly City, just as for Aeneas, the golden bough is only the earthly "type" of the fecundity of Elysium, to which it provides admission. The tree of the Apocalypse is ever fruitful, "ad sanitatem gentium" (Apoc. 22:2), just as the cross is the agent for the healing of men on earth. So in Eden is the weather mild and the earth abundantly prolific (Genesis A, 210-15).

Much of this metaphorical configuration is summed up in the explicit allegory of the Old English Phoenix.

¹ Blickling Homilies, p. 65.

Here, when the Phoenix begins to build his nest, the weather becomes fair and the sea lies calm (Phoenix, 182-89a), and this latter event reflects the apocalyptic abolition of the sea, which expresses in another way the abolition of all strife and chaos in God's New Creation. More significantly, the bird fashions its nest out of "wyrta wynsume ond wudubleda" (194), and this is the divine analogue of the earthly function and "meaning" of plant life. The Phoenix-poet makes the relation clear in the lines that follow, where the nest is kindled by the warmth of the sun and the bird dies and is reborn (208-64). As in both the Aeneid and the eschatology of the cross, plant life is specifically associated with entry into a new order of being--Aeneas enters the Underworld by means of the golden bough, the Christian enters heaven through the efficacy of the cross and what it stands for, and so here the kindling of the Phoenix's plant nest is the catalyst for its builder's rebirth. In the explanation of this allegory, given later in the poem, the poet tells us,

þær him nest wyrceð wið nipa gehwam
 dædum domlicum dryhtnes cempa,
 þonne he ælmessan earmum dæleð,
 dugeþa leasum, ond him dryhten gecygð,
 fæder on fultum...
 Swa nu in þam wicum willan fremmað
 mode ond mægne meotudes cempa,
 mæra tilgað; þæs him meorde wile
 ece ælmihtig eadge forgildan.
 Beoð him of þam wyrtum wic gestapelad
 in wuldres byrig weorca to leane,
 þæs þe hi geheoldan halge lare
 hate æt heortan, hige weallende
 dages ond nihtes dryhten lufiað,
 leofte geleafan leofne ceosað
 ofer woruldwelan; ne biþ him wynne hyht
 þæt hy þis lane lif long gewunien (451-5a, 470-81).

The plants are good deeds, and from them "dryhtnes cempa" fashions for himself a dwelling in the Heavenly City.

The potential, represented by earthly vegetation, becomes the actual, and one has, eschatologically, a home in heaven, constructed from the building-blocks of earthly right-doing, metaphorically expressed in mundane terms by adherence to the cross, the highest expression and end of the possibilities indicated by the plants of this world, itself once a literal tree and now the tree of life in Paradise.

In our nautical imagery, the ship of the Church is both the means to attaining the heavenly homeland and a prefiguration of our arrival there. The mast of the ship--again, the cross--points toward heaven, and among the Fathers, the top of the mast symbolically indicated passage to the beyond.² The cross indicates the eternal haven, just as it is a "beacen" to seafarers on earth. Life is a sea-journey, and we come into the harbor through the efficacy of the Atonement. In the famous expression of this metaphor at the end of Christ II, the poet concludes by saying,

Utan us to þære hyðe hyht stapelian,
ða us gerymde rodera waldend,
halge on heahþu, þa he heofonum astag (864-6).

It is "to þære hyðe"--to that harbor--that we must make fast our hope, and the use of the verb stapelian here, as in the Phoenix, 474b, quoted above, indicates the fastness and security of heaven, as opposed to the flux and

² Rahner, "Mastbaum und Antenne," p. 156.

change of this world. Going into harbor as a metaphor for the end of life is a common one from classical times, and Vergil describes death in terms of a ship going into port (Aeneid, vii, 598-9). Campbell Bonner has usefully collected a number of examples of this image of the harbor as the final resting place where human voyaging ends³ and notes that the intervening sea-journey is related to the notion of the souls of the dead crossing Acheron. He also points out that the idea of a harbor often implied personal protection, and this is analogous to the Christian conception of going to heaven as entering into the protection of God, as Scyld, for instance, floats in his funeral ship "on Frean ware" (Beowulf, 27b). So is the Exodus and entry into the Promised Land a type of entry into heaven. The idea of divine protection is indicated in the Old English Exodus by the columna nubis, and this earthly protection is only a figure for that which is to come. In Psalm 106:30, cited by Bonner and whence he derives the title of his article,⁴ we read that God "deduxit eos in portum voluntatis eorum," and so the Israelites are led to the haven of the Promised Land. In a similar vein, speaking metaphorically of the soul's progress, St. Augustine says that it is all right if a man forget what harbor he has come from, as long as he forget not the one to which he is going.⁵ The harbor as

³ Bonner, "Desired Haven," passim. For what follows, see especially pp. 50-4.

⁴ Ibid., p. 58.

⁵ De libero arbitrio, iii, 21, 61 (PL, 32, 1301).

an image of peace and rest and protection, apart from the examples cited by Bonner, is also used in 4 Esdras 12:42, where the people tell Esdras that, as their only remaining prophet, he is like a haven of safety for a ship in a storm--the ship being Israel and the storm being the turbulence and confusion of their affairs which has come about through their having sinned against God. Further, in the Vita Sancti Guthlaci, Felix says that he will turn his pen from the ignorant cavillings of his detractors "ad vitam Sancti Guthlaci...quasi ad portum vitae pergemus."⁶

These depictions of Paradise as either a green and fruitful land or a harbor which is the goal of all earthly "seafaring," however, are still not the actual but are only mundane images for a generically and ontologically different phenomenon altogether, presented in the only way, or ways, that mortal men can understand. The problem for religious man, therefore, is to make Paradise present, since, as Daniélou asserts, Paradise does not mean either a return to a former Golden Age or something in the future but is with us now and attainable in this life.⁷ As a means of thus realizing the actual, man from most primitive times has held the notion that space is not

⁶ Bertram Colgrave, ed., Felix's Life of Saint Guthlac (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1956), p. 62. So also in the Old English version of the legend, for which, see Charles W. Goodwin, ed., The Anglo-Saxon Version of the Life of St. Guthlac (London: John Russell Smith, 1848), p. 4. Here, the author says that he comes "to þære smyltestan hyðe, Guðlaces lifes."

⁷ Daniélou, From Shadows to Reality, p. 16.

homogeneous--that there^{ave} places more sacred than others, where contact with the divine is possible--and what is sacred is the preeminently "real."⁸ The ritual construction of sacred space reenacts the cosmogony and is often expressed in the notion of a temple or building on the one hand or as a cosmic mountain or tree or pillar on the other, all of which then become imagines mundi. Pope Gregory demonstrated his understanding of the nature of sacred space when he advised the Anglo-Saxon Churchmen to convert the old pagan temples into places of Christian worship, that they might thereby attract persons to the faith through the force of their former habits,⁹ and Turville-Petre records that a similar practice was adopted in medieval Norway.¹⁰ Our purpose now will be to present the various imagines mundi which appear in Old English poetry and to demonstrate their relation, as either actual or implicit expressions of "sacred space," to the world beyond. Before discussing the more specific images such as temples, mountains, buildings, and indeed, the earthly Church itself, as reflections of heaven, it would be well to discuss more generally the theme of the homeland, since for Germanic society one's homeland constituted one's "world."

The most basic point about the possession of a home-

⁸ For this and what follows, cf. Eliade, The Sacred and the Profane, pp. 20ff., 95.

⁹ Bede, Historia Ecclesiastica, i, 30 (PL, 95, 70-1).

¹⁰ Turville-Petre, Myth and Religion of the North, p. 243.

land is well summed up in these lines from the Old English Rune Poem:

Ƿ (epel) byþ oferleof æghwylcum men,
gif he mot ðær rihtes and gerysena on
brucan on bolde bleadum oftast (71-3).

It is dear to every man if he can enjoy there what is right and fitting. Among other notions, that of proper conduct is important to our consideration of the various "homelands" which appear in Old English poetry. If the warrior, in a Germanic framework, adheres to the heroic code of behavior--which we will discuss shortly--he thereby gains esteem and glory in the midst of the comitatus, but if he fails to live up to the heroic standards, he can lose not only esteem, but even the rights of tribal membership. Tacitus says,

scutum reliquisse praecipuum flagitium,
nec aut sacris adesse aut concilium inire
ignominioso fas, multique superstites
bellorum infamiam laqueo finierunt.¹¹

This whole ethic is perhaps best summed up in the well-known final line of Wiglaf's speech to Beowulf's cowardly retainers--"Deað bið sella eorla gehwylcum þonne edwitelif" (Beowulf, 2890b-91). So it is for the penitent Christian, who by acting well in this life, gains, on the cosmic scale, the full rights of membership in the Heavenly City. In a Germanic society, one attempts to maximize one's personal glory by courage in battle and loyalty to one's chief, and ascribing one's own heroic deeds to one's chief is held to be, as Tacitus tells us,¹² the

¹¹ Germania, ch. 6.

¹² Ibid., ch. 14.

height of loyalty. Similarly, for the Christian, one ascribes the glory of one's deeds to God rather than to oneself and thereby gains that eternal blessedness which is so much more important than earthly renown. Just as conduct, in both Germanic and Christian conceptions of the world, is related to one's future fate, so are many of the homelands in Old English poetry types for that which is to come. Guthlac's barrow, Judith's Bethulia, and the lost and lamented homelands of the Wanderer and the Seafarer exist on both the literal and metaphoric levels, and each is significant in a different way.

In order to understand the components of the Germanic homeland, one must first examine, at least briefly, the concepts upon which the heroic society is based. The most important element in the Germanic social framework is loyalty--both the loyalty between a lord and his retainers and the mutual loyalty which exists among the retainers themselves. It is the lord's obligation to defend his retainers and to give them gifts, and it is the retainers' obligation to support their lord in battle and to defend one another. The demonstration of this principle in action is vengeance, it being one's duty to avenge one's lord and comrades after their deaths. It is in part, then, the fear of vengeance which deters one's enemies and keeps a man safe from hostile attacks. Finally, treasure can be seen as the material symbol of human worth and as something which naturally accrues to those who deserve

it.¹³ A hero cannot exist in isolation, since then he will have no-one to avenge him and no-one to remember his glory after he is gone.

The "hall-joys," wherein the activity of the Germanic homeland primarily consists, are eating and drinking, the songs of the scop, the giving and receiving of gifts, and the swearing of oaths and allegiance. In The Riming Poem, for instance, the poet's art itself is the symbol of the good times gone by, and in The Order of the World, the scop is the central embodiment of the joys of the dugub.¹⁴ The presence of these hall-joys indicate a society's well-being. During Hroðgar's reign of prosperity, Heorot was the seat of such recreations (Beowulf, 88-100), but the coming of Grendel caused Hroðgar's retainers to forsake the joys of the hall, and the lack of these activities is symptomatic of the disorder which has now taken over. Similarly, with the Wanderer and the Seafarer, the joys of the homeland for which they initially yearn indicate the stability and "well-being" which they now lack.

These ideals are easily translated into Christian terms. God, like the Germanic lord, is the giver of all blessings, and in return, we are obligated to show him loyalty. God's blessings are analogous to the treasure dispensed by the Germanic lord, and he rewards the good

¹³ Michael D. Cherniss usefully summarizes all this in his Ingeld and Christ, passim.

¹⁴ For a discussion of both of these points, see Isaacs, Structural Principles, pp. 64-5, 82.

works which we perform on earth, just as his counterpart in the earthly comitatus rewards brave deeds in battle. The righteous win a place "in þam uplican eðle" (Phoenix, 392), which is heaven, and are "fusne on forðweg" (Guthlac A, 801a) to join the dugub in heaven. The Germanic king, embodying and exemplifying the entire body of men under him, is distinguished by his ability as a rex pacificus, so Beowulf's fifty-year reign of peace is, once again, only the earthly reflection of the pax aeterna of the Heavenly City, ruled over by Christ. Just as there is an ideal heroic society, so is there an ideal Christian homeland, represented by the earthly paradise or the Garden of Eden, and both heaven and the Garden of Eden are referred to so frequently in Old English poetry by such epithets as "wuldres eðel" and "lifes eðel" as to make documentation superfluous. In the Fathers, life on earth is conceived of as a journey back to our patria,¹⁵ where God is both our "native land" and the means of getting there, as he sheds his grace on those who follow his commandments.¹⁶ In Eden/Paradise, the weather is mild and there is no rain, yet the earth is still fruitful, there flowing waters and springs, it is "beorhtost" and "fægrost" (Andreas, 103), and there there is no hunger or thirst (Christ III, 1660-1),¹⁷ and it possesses

¹⁵ De doctrina, i, 4, 4 (PL, 34, 20-1); Boethius, De consolacione philosophiae, iii, Prosa 12, iv, Prosa 1 (PL, 63, 778, 788).

¹⁶ De doctrina, i, 11, 11 (PL, 34, 23).

¹⁷ Cf. Blickling Homilies, pp. 63, 101. For further information on this topos generally, see Hildegard L.C.

all the other stock characteristics of the literary locus amoenus. It is there that the "soþfæste sunne" shines (Phoenix, 587-8), and the word soþfæste implies in its second element the "fastness" and security brought by the possession of such a homeland. In addition, no sinners may be allowed therein--"ne mæg þær inwitfull ænig geferan womscyldig mon" (Genesis A, 948-9a).¹⁸ These elements constitute for the Christian the equivalent of the Germanic hall-joys, and no-one can partake of them unworthily, any more than a cowardly retainer can find honor among the comitatus. Eden, with its extraordinary blessings, represents an ordered existence in obedience to God. After the Fall, Adam and Eve are cast out, and Adam's sin disrupts the order of the earthly paradise, just as Grendel's depredations disrupt the order of Heorot. The conditions of their life become totally changed--they have no "sælða gesetena" (Genesis B, 785a), Adam is slit by hunger and thirst (Genesis B, 802b), and they are beset by adverse weather (Genesis B, 807-13). The logical conclusion which Adam draws from this is "unc is mihtig god, waldend wraðmed" (Genesis B, 814b-15a). This negation of the Christian homeland can be seen in The Seafarer, and such an expression as "corna caldast" (Seafarer, 33a) consciously inverts the fecundity of Paradise. All this is as it should be. A so-

Tristram, "Stock Descriptions of Heaven and Hell in Old English Prose and Poetry," NM, 79 (1978), 102-13.

¹⁸ Cf. Phoenix, 3b-6, Apoc. 21:27, and Eph. 5:27, in connection with the last of which, Burlin, The Old English Advent, p. 86, cites Augustine, PL, 37, 1493.

ciety which lacks warriors who are brave enough to win treasure or to fight off the attacks of an evil monster, deserves to be denied the pleasures of the hall, and men on earth, being sinners, ought not to enjoy the bliss of Paradise.

Life, according to St. Augustine, must necessarily be social,¹⁹ and here again, Christian and Germanic notions converge. A Germanic warrior possesses security by being part of the comitatus--he knows he will be avenged and that fear of vengeance will turn aside the hostility of his enemies--and it is the same for the Christian, who is protected, in essence, by his membership in the civitas Dei, which is the "world" of Christian cosmology, just as homeland and hall are the "world" of the Germanic.²⁰ For the penitent Christian, this is the highest object of his desire and completely replaces any yearning of the no longer attainable earthly paradise. It is possible for him to have a "place apart" on earth--as Guthlac has in his barrow--but this is only a temporary stopping-off point on the way to heaven. The Germanic homeland which we have defined is, of course, earthly,

¹⁹ De civitate Dei, xix, 5 (PL, 41, 631-2).

²⁰ We have already spoken (p. 221) of going to heaven, as with Scyld, as the equivalent of going into the protection of the Lord. Klaeber, "Die christlichen Elemente," pp. 453-4, also finds this notion in Beowulf, 186b-88, and 3109, and says that this may represent the Germanic idea of protection and legal asylum, mixed with a clear Christian conception of God as protector, thus demonstrating once again the conflation of Germanic and Christian notions. He also cites (p. 454) numerous similar examples from both the Fathers and the corpus of Old English poetry.

whereas the civitas Dei is not, and this ontological difference calls for a partial redefinition of terms, the working out of which can be seen in such a poem as Guthlac A, where Guthlac's conflict with the fiends revolves in part around a misunderstanding of the concepts of companionship and isolation. The fiends, only possessing earthly knowledge, urge Guthlac to give up his barrow simply because he is alone (273-91) and therefore cannot possibly resist their attacks, and they hope he will return to his homeland (353-5), not realizing where his homeland really is. The contrast, clearly, is one between those who are secundum hominem and those who are secundum Deum. Guthlac is isolated in purely human terms, but this is not the crucial point, since he has only given up fellowship with men for fellowship with God, a distinction which the fiends are unable to grasp, and the heavenly messenger with whom Guthlac holds nocturnal discourse (Guthlac B, 1238-54) becomes a symbol for the substitute which Guthlac has found--and which every Christian potentially may find--for the transitory pleasures of earthly friendship. The fiends are indeed isolated themselves in a far more important sense, having been cut off from the presence of God.

A homeland is the seat of security and permanence, in which one possesses both personal definition and protection from harm or external invasion. This stability is reflected in the buildings which exist in one's homeland, and these can be treated on both the literal and metaphoric levels. Objectively, the physical structure

of Heorot represents the stability of the Danish society under Hroðgar. Having been granted "heresped" (Beowulf, 64b) and "wiges weorðmynd" (65a), Hroðgar conceived of Heorot as a glorious place for the dispensing of treasure, and it is the "healærna mæst" (78a) just as Hroðgar is the greatest of leaders. Its very loftiness (81b-2a) reflects the loftiness of Hroðgar's renown, and it contains the hall-joys which are the indicators of social stability and well-being. When Grendel arrives, however, the situation changes, and it is enough for the poet to say that things went on "oð þæt idel stod husa selest" (145b-6a). The "idleness" of Heorot tells us of the lack of hall-joys and of the disorder in the society. Men go to seek a safer resting place (138-43), and thus their fear of Grendel is expressed in relation to their hall, which is isolated because they are cowardly. Grendel now rules the hall, and its isolation reflects the monster's own--"wið rihte wan, ana wið eallum" (144b-5a). Here Heorot is the objective correlative, if you will, of the forces at work in Danish society.

In Christian terms, just as Heorot is a lofty hall, reflecting the might of its builder, so is heaven a hall built by the Lord (cf. Judgement Day I, 92-3a), and the poet of Christ and Satan says that "Hafað wuldres bearn his seolfes seld swegl betolden" (586b-87). More esoterically, the Pater Noster, with which men overcome the wiles of Satan, is described as the "scyppendes seld" (Solomon and Saturn, 79b), and this also, however arcanelly, is a representation of God's power in terms of

his "hall." Heaven is frequently described as "heahge-timbru,"²¹ and this is another expression of the loftiness of God. An interesting analogue from Old Norse appears in Grímnismál, 16, where Nóatún, the home of Njörðr, is described as a "hátimbruðum hörgi," and at Iðavellir in Völuspá, the Æsir "hörg ok hof hátimbruðu" (Völuspá, 7). Heorot is an image of the world of Denmark, just as God's "high-timbered hall" is a metaphor for Paradise, and as Heorot becomes isolated because of the cowardliness of Hroðgar's retainers, so does Eden become empty because of the sinfulness of men and so are the rebellious angels cast out of heaven, thus leaving it, if not empty, at least depopulated. Heaven is closed to "man-fremmendum"--those who are led astray by Satan, who controls the "hall" of this world, as Grendel controls the seat of the Danish court. During Grendel's depredations, Heorot stands idle, and this dissolution of the heroic order reflects the chaos of pre-Creation times. Klaeber suggests that the phrase "idel ond unnyt" (Beowulf, 413a) may have some connection with the "terra...inanis et vacua" of Genesis 1:1,²² although we will have to postpone our discussion of the relation of Heorot to cosmogonic myth until a somewhat later context.²³

Whatever the significance of Heorot as symbol, the theme of buildings, fortifications and builders in Old

²¹ Cf. Guthlac A, 584; Genesis B, 739; Christ III, 1181; and Christ and Satan, 29.

²² Klaeber, "Die christlichen Elemente," p. 468.

²³ See below, pp. 251-2, 267-8.

English poetry has broader metaphorical applications as well, but so as not to get ahead of ourselves, it is best that we first discuss various other more general imagines mundi, the understanding of which will aid us in our interpretation of the Old English texts at hand. One of the most important of these images is that of the temple. In Israel, the temple was the centre of all life, and in the Qumran sect, the temple came to be identified with the community itself, both of them being equally the sanctuary of God.²⁴ Throughout the Old Testament, the fortunes of the temple reflect the fortunes of Israel, and its successive destructions and rebuildings are directly proportional to the nation's waverings between pride and sinfulness on the one hand and devotion to God on the other. This is particularly noticeable in the accounts of the Maccabean wars, and in 1 Macc. 14:31, invading the country and attacking the sanctuary are placed side by side as being equivalent in meaning. Similarly, in 2 Macc. 5:17, the author says that the Lord only permitted the profanation of the temple because of the "peccata habitantium." In Germanic society, the king's seat was, like Heorot, the focal point of the nation and was at the same time the central place of worship.²⁵ The temple was often the possession of the sac-

²⁴ Klaus Balzer, "The Meaning of the Temple in the Lukan Writings," HTR, 58 (1965), pp. 264, 269.

²⁵ Cf. Hans Naumann, "Die magische Seite des altgermanischen Königtums," pp. 7-8, who cites Tacitus, chs. 7 and 11.

ral king,²⁶ and it is needless for us to remark upon the consequent relation of the welfare of the Germanic temple/king's-residence to the welfare of the nation itself.

The significance of temples--one form of "sacred space"--is that they are the place of transcendence and of communication with the divine. For Israel, the temple was the locus of the presence of God, and his dwelling therein was necessary for the salvation of the nation.²⁷ The role of temples in allowing communication with the divine is demonstrated in Guthlac B when Guthlac goes "to godes temple" to meet the heavenly messenger with whom he converses (cf. 1001b-07a). Similarly, when he is about to depart this life, he returns again to God's temple, where his servant Beccel seeks him out.

Ongon ða snottor hæle,
ar, onbehtþegn, æþeles neosan
to þam halgan hofe, fond þa hlingendne
fusne on forðsib frean unwenne,
gæsthaligne in godes temple
soden sarwylmum (1145b-50a).

There is no more fitting place from which to leave this world for the next. Simply by being in "þam halgan hofe," he has already drawn closer to God, and it is the "type" of the celestial kingdom he is about to enter. As Eliade notes, temples generally are the earthly reproductions of a transcendent model,²⁸ and the temple of Old Testament times, consecrated in a limited space, "was the sacrament

²⁶ Chaney, The Cult of Kingship, pp. 73-6.

²⁷ Balzer, pp. 265-8, cites the appropriate Old Testament references.

²⁸ Eliade, The Sacred and the Profane, pp. 58-9.

and prefiguring of the consecration of the whole universe, to be fulfilled in the resurrection of Jesus and the creation of the cosmos of the Church."²⁹ The temple as a reflection of the cosmos here is analogous to the notion of the cross as embracing, in its four spatial extensions, all creation. We have already noted the common practice in Anglo-Saxon times of setting up a cross as a place of worship in lieu of a church,³⁰ and both are related expressions of communication with and adherence to the divine. This "transcendental" image of the temple is reflected in modern Norwegian folktale by the belief that everything connected with churches possesses some mystical power.³¹

In Christian/eschatological terms, the new Temple, brought by Christ, is the Christian community,³² and the contrast is between the heavenly and earthly tabernacles, where the sacrifice of Christ's blood replaces the blood sacrifices practiced under the Old Law (cf. Heb. 9:1-14). Methodius of Olympus, in treating the theme of the temple, says that the Jewish tabernacle is the shadow, the Church the image, and the Heavenly City the reality,³³ thus relating the temple image specifically to Christian

²⁹ Daniélou, The Bible and the Liturgy, pp. 223-4.

³⁰ See above, p. 187.

³¹ Christiansen, Folktales of Norway, p. xxiii.

³² Cf. Daniélou, The Bible and the Liturgy, p. 227, and Balzer, p. 271, the latter of whom cites in this connection 1 Cor. 3:9, 16-17, 2 Cor. 6:16-17, and Eph. 2:19-22.

³³ Convivium decem virginum, v, 7 (PG, 18, 109B); cited

eschatology, and Rabanus Maurus follows in a long exegetical tradition when he interprets the temple of Psalm 65:6 as "patria coelestis."³⁴ So in the apocryphal writings of early Judaeo-Christianity was the Ascension conceived of as a transposition of the Messiah from the Temple in Jerusalem to the Temple of Heaven.³⁵ Both the old Temple and the old Sabbath are abolished and fulfilled in Christ, but the Temple to come is of a completely different nature and is in fact, as John tells us in the Apocalypse, God himself.

Et templum non vidi in ea: Dominus enim
Deus omnipotens templum illius est, et
Agnus (Apoc. 21:22).

No longer will things be conceived of in earthly terms, and the pure contemplation of God--the reward of the righteous in the Heavenly City³⁶--will replace the carnal shadow by which it is represented in this world.

The beginning of all this symbolism is the temple built by Solomon (see particularly 3 Kings 5-6 and 2 Chr. 2-3), and the identification of Solomon with Christ had already been made by New Testament times (cf. Lk. 11:31). Solomon was said to have built a literal house, whereas "non Excelsus in manufactis habitat" (Acts 7:48; cf. 49), and Solomon's temple was widely interpreted as a type of

in Gospel Message, p. 261, where Daniélou puts this whole interpretation into a more general typological context.

³⁴ Allegoriae (PL, 112, 1064B).

³⁵ Cf. Daniélou, Theology of Jewish Christianity, pp. 259-60.

³⁶ Cf. De civitate Dei, x, 32, 3 (PL, 41, 316).

the Church, for which we may take the following example from Bede.

Domus Dei quam aedificavit rex Salomon in Jerusalem, in figura facta est sanctae universalis Ecclesiae, quae a primo electo usque ad ultimum, qui in fine mundi nasciturus est, quotidie per gratiam regis pacifici, sui videlicet Redemptoris, aedificatur.³⁷

The author of the twelfth century Old Norse homily In dedicatione tempeli explicitly refers to the archetypal nature of Solomon's temple.

Salomon konungr gerðe fyrst mysteri guði.
ok bauð lyð sinum at halda hotið þa er
al-gort var mysteret...Af þessum røcum
hofosc kirkiur ok allt kirkiudaga halld.³⁸

A large exegetical tradition of the various parts of the temple as symbolizing both aspects of the Church universal and the individual Christian grew up, and G. Turville-Petre, referring heavily to Book Fourteen of Rabanus's De Universo, which is the fullest medieval account of such symbolism, demonstrates the influence of this tradition on the homily cited above.³⁹ The altar, for example, symbolizes Christ, the bells symbolize the preachers, the chancel the saints in heaven, and the nave Christians on earth, although at the same time, the different parts of the church symbolize the various virtues possessed by

³⁷ De templo Salomonis, i (PL, 91, 737CD). See also Ambrose, PL, 15, 1585; Isidore, PL, 83, 113; and Rabanus Maurus, PL, 109, 186; PL, 111, 59.

³⁸ Gustav Indrebø, ed., Gamalt norsk homilieboek: Cod. AM 619 4^o (Oslo: Kjeldeskriftfondet, 1931), p. 95.

³⁹ G. Turville-Petre, "The Old Norse Homily on the Dedication," Mediaeval Studies, 11 (1949), 206-18. Also of interest in this connection generally is Bede's De templo Salomonis (PL, 91, 735-808).

the individual Christian. The poet of the Old English Exodus describes the glory of Solomon's temple, and his words remind us of both Heorot and the "hall" of heaven.

Ðær eft se snotttra sunu Dauides,
wuldorfæst cyning, witgan larum
getimbrede tempel gode,
alh haligne, eorðcyninga
se wisesta on woruldrice,
heahst ond haligost, hæleðum gefrægost,
mæst ond mærost, para þe manna bearn,
fira æfter foldan, folmum geworhte (389-96).

Solomon is a "wuldorfæst cyning," but Hroðgar and God are equally "glorious." Hroðgar is "glorious" because he has been granted "heresped" (Beowulf, 64a), and the building of Heorot is an expression of his glory, but the Lord also is commonly referred to by such epithets as "wuldres cyning," and one need hardly question the relationship here between Solomon and God, especially in light of the New Testament typology of Solomon and Christ. Solomon is "se wisesta on woruldrice," just as Christ is the only true sapientia. Solomon's temple is "heahst ond haligost," just as Heorot is the "healærna mæst" (Beowulf, 78a), and both, on the anagogical level, are images of heaven. Solomon's temple here is also meant to symbolize the Church universal,⁴⁰ and this ecclesi¹ological exegesis of the passage reinforces any interpretation of the Exodus as dealing with the earth-bound Church, represented by Israel, journeying toward heaven under the protection and guidance of the pillar/cross.

⁴⁰ Cf. J.R. Hall, "The Building of the Temple in Exodus: Design for Typology," Neophilologus, 59 (1975), 616-21, and Lucas, Exodus, p. 125n.

As an imago mundi, the temple is not only a spatial but a temporal symbol as well. The building of the temple reenacts the cosmogony and therefore reflects at the same time the yearly cycle of rebirth in nature.⁴¹ The application to Christianity is clear, and Luke expresses it thus,

Deus, qui fecit mundum, et omnia quae in eo
sunt, hic caeli et terrae cum sit Dominus,
non in manufactis templis habitat (Acts 17:24).

God created the earth but does not dwell "in manufactis templis," thereby linking the cosmogony and eschatology and extending Methodius's statement that the Jewish tabernacle is the shadow, the Church the image, and the Heavenly City--wherein there is no manufactum templum, but only the pure contemplation of God--the reality. The Church is both the "world" of the Christian and a prefiguration of Paradise, and virtually any image, both in the Fathers and in Old English, which can be interpreted allegorically as the Church, can also be interpreted analogically as referring to God's kingdom above, from the very nature of analytical typology.

The notion of sacred space is reflected on a more exoteric level in the belief that every building or habitation is sacred, and in traditional cultures, every man's dwelling reflects the world⁴²--it is a temple on a smaller scale, holy to its inhabitants, and not to be

⁴¹ For a discussion of this point, see Eliade, The Sacred and the Profane, pp. 73-6. He notes, inter alia, the etymological kinship of templum and tempus.

⁴² Eliade, The Sacred and the Profane, pp. 42-3, 53.

entered arbitrarily, just as none but the initiated can enter the temple. Thus, in the Origenian exegesis of the second century, Rahab's House (cf. Joshua 2) is a type of the Church and, consequently, of God's kingdom.⁴³ Jesus expresses this building/heaven comparison when he says, "In domo Patris mei mansiones multae sunt" (Jn. 14:2), and Rabanus Maurus interprets the domus of Psalm 22:6 as "patria coelestis."⁴⁴ Commonly among the Fathers, the temple is referred to as the domus Dei, and Cyprian, interpreting the domus Dei as Christ,⁴⁵ only refers once again to the tradition of Christ as the "temple" of the New Jerusalem. So in the Vision of Hermas (iii, 3:3-4:1) is the Church conceived of as a building, built upon the waters.⁴⁶ The context here is that of the Creation, and in the account of Creation in the Old English Genesis A (103-68a), the world is seen as a great hall, built in the midst of the ocean. Alvin Lee rightly notes here, especially in reference to lines 150b-53, the use of the hall as both a metaphorical imago mundi and a figure of the Church,⁴⁷ and in the strictly Christian context of the poem, both images conflate and become equivalent in meaning. In Old Norse, analogously, Æsir-oriented creation is composed of many halls (cf. Grímnismál, 4-16),

⁴³ Daniélou, From Shadows to Reality, p. 251.

⁴⁴ PL, 112, 911.

⁴⁵ PL, 4, 279.

⁴⁶ Cited in Daniélou, Theology of Jewish Christianity, p. 295.

⁴⁷ Lee, Guest-Hall, p. 26.

just as the Christian heaven has "mansiones multae."

A related image is that of Noah's ark, the symbolism of which we have discussed quite adequately above.⁴⁸ Noah is a type of Christ, and the ark is a figure of the Church. In the apocryphal book of Enoch, the name Noah was held to mean "peace" or "rest,"⁴⁹ and as such, life in the ark was held to prefigure the peace brought by the Church universal⁵⁰ and to look forward eschatologically to the peace of the Heavenly City. In the symbolism of the ark, as with that of the cross, the temple, and so many other symbols, past, present, and future are linked. The ark, carrying within it the seminal principle of a new world, reenacts the cosmogony, prefigures the New Creation brought by Christ, and foreshadows the final rebirth of all things in the Heavenly City. In relation to our hall/temple/building imagery, the ark is described in Old English as a "merehus" (Genesis A, 1303a) and as a "þellfæstenne" (Genesis A, 1482a)--a "fastness" made of planks, just as Heorot would be--and this latter term implies the security offered by the Germanic hall or, on a different plane, the Christian heaven. It protects those dwelling within from the waves of the sea of life, as the Germanic hall protects its inhabitants from the

⁴⁸ See pp. 152-4 et passim.

⁴⁹ Enoch 106:1-19 (Charles, II, 278-9), cited in Rahner, "Die Arche Noe," pp. 147-8. See also Jerome, PL, 23, 1217.

⁵⁰ Ambrose, Commentarii in Lucam, ii, 92; cited in Rahner, "Die Arche Noe," p. 154. The most basic source, once again, for all this ark-typology is De civitate Dei, xv, 26.

invasions of foes and shelters them by merit of their membership in an internally loyal society, represented in the physical structure of the hall. So in Genesis A, 1371a, Noah's sons are referred to as the "dugeðum dyrum," and the physical ark itself represents the peace resulting from the harmonious working of such a society. The Genesis-poet also refers to the ark as a treasure-hoard (cf. Genesis A, 1439),⁵¹ and this reflects not only the Germanic hall as seat of the nation's wealth, where gifts are freely given and received, but also the function of temples generally. Especially in Old Testament times, it is the storehouse of riches, and the destruction of the Jewish temple is always accompanied by the removal of its treasures as a secondary metaphor for the destruction of the Jewish nation. When the temple is periodically rebuilt, as the nation's fortunes change for the better, this is accompanied by the desire to win back for it the treasures earlier purloined by the barbarian invaders. The eschatological implications are clear, and the treasure in the Jewish temple or in Noah's ark is only the type of the eternal wealth of heaven, toward which all strivings on this earth must ultimately be directed. In Exodus, the close juxtaposition of the account of Solomon's temple (389-96) with that of Noah's ark (362-76) is surely significant, and as we can discern from the above, they are iconographically related. Both structures are the greatest of their kind, and as Solomon's

⁵¹ See also Exodus, 368a, where it is called the "maðmhorda mæst," and above, pp. 177-8.

temple is "mæst ond mærost" (395a), so is Noah's ark the "maðmhorda mæst" (368a). Their mutually superlative nature points to the perfection of the heavenly kingdom, which, in absolute terms, is "mæst ond mærost" and is not, like the earthly temple, "folmum geworhte" (396b). It is both the goal of Noah's voyage and the reflection of his vessel, and these two related passages reinforce our interpretation of the Exodus as an allegory of entry into both heaven and the Church, baptismal in nature and informed by the eschatology of the cross, which is associated both with the symbolism of the ark and with that of the temple.

Another imago mundi, and also one with eschatological implications, is that of the cosmic mountain. Mt. Sion, like the temple, was a centre to the Jewish nation, and the archetypal significance of mountains as the dwelling place or point of communication with the gods is well known. Eliade notes the consecrating power of height and rightly asserts that every ascent represents an ontological breakthrough.⁵² The mountain symbolism of both the Bible and the Fathers bears this out. Moses receives the Ten Commandments on Mt. Sinai (Ex. 19:18-25), Solomon builds his temple on the top of Mt. Moriah (2 Chr. 3:1), and the mons Dei is referred to countless times. Similarly, Christ ordains the twelve on the mountain (Mk. 3:13-15), and he goes into the mountain to pray

⁵² Patterns, pp. 99-102. As we pointed out in our last chapter in relation to the cross (see above, p. 137, and The Sacred and the Profane, p. 129), verticality alone is enough to evoke transcendence.

(cf. Mk. 6:46, Lk. 6:12). The Sermon on the Mount is significant in that such an elevated place is the ideal locus for teaching and the communication of divine truth, as it is nearer to heaven and to the God who is the source of all truth. In the Confessiones, St. Augustine refers to God's mountain, which is Paradise,⁵³ and the Church--the City of God on earth--is also referred to as a mountain, either as the mons Domini or as the mons Sion, which it fulfills.⁵⁴

This tradition carries over into Old English. In the Blickling Homilies, both Christ and the Blessed Virgin are said to have ascended to heaven from the Mount of Olives, and at the point where Christ ascended, the homilist tells us, there is now a great church built.⁵⁵ So, in the Seventeenth Blickling Homily, is the Church of St. Michael built on a mountain, and the twelve mile height of this mountain⁵⁶ reminds one of the allegorical Land of the Phoenix, which is "twelfum fæðmrimes" higher than any mountain (Phoenix, 28-32). The association of mountains here with divine transcendence is clear. Further on in the homily, St. Michael appears and says,

Secgge ic þe nu eac þæt ic onsundrum þa
stowe her on eorðan lufige, & ofer ealle
opre ic hie geceas & eac gecyþe on eallum
ðam tacnum þe þær gelimpeð, þæt ic eom

⁵³ Confessiones, ix, 3, 5 (PL, 32, 765).

⁵⁴ Cf. Hilary, PL, 9, 414, 680, 682; Augustine, PL, 34, 442; PL, 36, 478; PL, 37, 1270; PL, 38, 267; Cassiodorus, PL, 70, 38, 696.

⁵⁵ Blickling Homilies, pp. 125, 137.

⁵⁶ Ibid., pp. 197, 211.

ðære stowe on sundran scyppend & hyrde.⁵⁷

This is analogous to Guthlac's having chosen the remote barrow as his "eorðlic eðel" (Guthlac A, 261a), to his defiance of the fiends, and to the Guthlac-poet's statement that

Stod seo dygle stow dryhtne in gemyndum
idel ond æmen, eþelriehte feor,
bad bisæce betran hyrdes (Guthlac A, 215-17).

Just as St. Michael is the "scyppend & hyrde" of the spot upon which his Church is built, so is Guthlac the "hyrde" of his barrow, where he is the "creator" of a dwelling dedicated to God. In the homily, when the Christian people enter battle to defend themselves with the help of God, their enemies are struck by lightning which issues from the mountain,⁵⁸ and this is a typical sky-epiphany, reminiscent of the thunderbolts of Zeus or Þórr. More generally, the burial mounds of Anglo-Saxon times were often looked upon as holy places, where assemblies were held and royal decrees were read, and the elevation of such barrows was thought to indicate the glorified state of their inhabitants, even though in early times many such pre-Christian barrows were originally associated, like Guthlac's, with the devil and his myrmidons.⁵⁹

In other traditions as well, mountains and elevated places are associated with the divine. In the Aeneid (ii, 741-3), the temple of Ceres was built on a mound,

⁵⁷ Ibid., p. 201.

⁵⁸ Ibid., p. 203.

⁵⁹ Chaney, The Cult of Kingship, pp. 96-105, and "Paganism to Christianity," p. 202.

and a tumulus covered the grave of Polydorus (iii, 22-47). Roland also, like the Christ and Virgin Mary of the homilies, climbs a hill prior to dying, from which place his soul is carried to heaven,⁶⁰ and in modern Norwegian folktale, mountains have constant magical associations as the dwelling-places of trolls and other supernatural or non-human beings.⁶¹ In the Fathers, both Christ and the Blessed Virgin are referred to as "mountains," and Augustine says, for example, that Micah prophesied of Christ under the figure of a mountain.⁶² The association of mountains and elevated places with God is in polar opposition to the chthonic attributes of the sea, the dwelling place of demons and the natural locus of opposition to the divine. Commenting on Psalm 35:7, Augustine makes the contrast between the abyss of sin and the mountains of God, which are "justitia eius."

Abyssum dicit profunditatem peccatorum,
quo quisque pervenit contemnendo Deum...
Sicut montes Dei justitia eius, qui per
gratiam ipsius fiunt magni: sic et per
judicia ipsius fiunt in profundo, qui
merguntur in ultima.⁶³

This conforms to what Maud Bodkin refers to as the "Heaven-Hell Archetype," and she discusses the emotional significance of mountains and fertile gardens as natural symbols of the divine and indicative of supreme well-being, in opposition to the caverns, darkness, and under-

⁶⁰ Chanson de Roland, 2259-70, 2366-74.

⁶¹ Christiansen, Folktales of Norway, passim.

⁶² De civitate Dei, xviii, 30, 1 (PL, 41, 586).

⁶³ Enarrationes in Psalmos, xxxv, 10 (PL, 36, 348-9).

ground waters of hell or Hades, which are the objectivization of imaginative fear.⁶⁴ We have already spoken of such sea-imagery in some detail in our first chapter, however, and it is not necessary to belabor the obvious.

By now, the relation of these various imagines mundi should be clear. The building of temples on mountains is merely a reinforcement of their mutual symbolic/archetypal meaning, and as Eliade notes, temples are themselves replicas of cosmic mountains, serving as a link between heaven and earth.⁶⁵ Both mountains and temples, like cosmic trees and the cross, are often seen as axes mundi. For Christians, Golgotha is the cardinal point of the world, and God also descended at the "middle of the earth."⁶⁶ So in Old Norse is Troy, the original home of the gods, located at the centre of the earth.⁶⁷ Balzer points out the symbolic nature of the Mt. of Olives and demonstrates the significance of the Mt. of Olives/Temple construct in Luke, where they come to be almost equivalent metaphors, in fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy.⁶⁸ Both mountains and temples are analogous to the Church, so consequently, both look as well to the Last Days. In the Pauline typology of the New Testament this is already

⁶⁴ Bodkin, Archetypal Patterns in Poetry, pp. 98-103, 114.

⁶⁵ The Sacred and the Profane, p. 39; cf. Patterns, p. 100.

⁶⁶ James, The Tree of Life, p. 144.

⁶⁷ Snorra Edda, p. 20.

⁶⁸ Balzer, "The Meaning of the Temple," pp. 274-5.

explicit, and the Apostle directly associates Mt. Sion with the heavenly Jerusalem.

Sed accessistis ad Sion montem, et civitatem Dei viventis, Ierusalem caelestem, et multorum millium angelorum frequentiam
(Heb. 12:22; cf. 23-4).

So also the ark--itself analogous to God's New Creation--resting on Mt. Ararat, was interpreted allegorically by the Fathers as representing the entry of the faithful into the heavenly kingdom.⁶⁹ All these images refer back in some way to the Creation, apply to the present days of the Church, in which they are partially fulfilled, and then look ultimately to the end of time.

Now let us return to the theme of building and builders in Old English, the metaphorical applications of which can well be seen in such a poem as Guthlac A. Guthlac is characterized as a builder (733), and he specifically constructs a dwelling on his barrow. As a devout Christian, Guthlac's earthly existence takes on meaning in relation to his home on the barrow, which he preserves as a place for God in this world. His purpose--that of achieving heavenly glory--is closely related to the barrow, both as symbol and as physical place. It comes to stand for "all that is significant in the spiritual life of the good Christian,"⁷⁰ and as he is able to preserve it, so does he reserve for himself a place in the heavenly kingdom. The entire contention between Guthlac and

⁶⁹ Rahner, "Die Arche Noe," p. 157.

⁷⁰ Laurence K. Shook, "The Burial Mound in Guthlac A," MP, 58 (1960), p. 10.

the demons, as Shook has pointed out,⁷¹ is for the barrow itself, since neither he nor the demons can be content without it. For Guthlac, it is the physical representation and prototype of the eternal bliss for which he strives, and for the demons, it is the only place in which they can obtain rest from their wanderings. Guthlac, who defends the barrow with spiritual rather than physical weapons,⁷² must inevitably prevail, and he becomes a paradigm for all Christian martyrs faced with the adversities of life on earth.

Guthlac's dwelling is a place set apart, and being on an elevation, it exists in typological relation to heaven. His barrow, like the Land of the Phoenix or the Garden of Eden, is closed to "manfremmendum," and this reflects the dialectic of sacred space--it is hard to get there, not being open to sinners and their kind, yet every dwelling and temple is itself a "centre," and as such reveals a nostalgia for Paradise.⁷³ Guthlac's barrow is a place holy to God, and it becomes, like St. Michael's Church of the homily, a temple to God on earth in expectation of the kingdom to follow. This being the case, it is possible to associate Guthlac with Christ. One immediately thinks of the image of Christ as the builder of the temple which appears at the beginning of Christ I (2-15), and of its ultimate source in John 2:19. Christ

⁷¹ Ibid., p. 9.

⁷² Frances Randall Lipp, "Guthlac A: An Interpretation," MS, 33 (1971), p. 54.

⁷³ Eliade, Patterns, pp. 383-4.

is both the builder and the thing built, and as Augustine tells us, the whole body of the Church makes up "unus Christus,"⁷⁴ thus making the barrow/temple/Church construct in the poem more than clear. We have already cited (p. 237) Rabanus's interpretation of the temple in Psalm 65:6 as "patria coelestis," and it is useful to note the different allegorical interpretations which he places on the other temples that appear in scripture. They represent variously "patria coelestis," "corpus Christi," "virgo Maria," "corpus nostrum," "mens devota," and "viri sancti."⁷⁵ It is not difficult to see how these interpretations relate, both in theological terms, and more importantly, as applied to Old English poetry. Guthlac A can still serve as our example. Guthlac is a vir sanctus whose struggle is to preserve his mens devota in order to gain the celestial kingdom, of which his barrow is a prototype. His conflict in the poem revolves specifically around the barrow, however, so not only is his dwelling a prototype of heaven, but it is an objective symbol of his mens on earth, and just as the fiends are unable to deprive him of his barrow, so are they unable to make him despair, despite the violence of their threats. The patria coelestis is anagogically related to the corpus Christi, which is the Church, and it is through Mary--who is commonly referred to as God's temple--that Christ is born into the world. This is only

⁷⁴ De civitate Dei, xvii, 4 (PL, 41, 532). See also Epistola clxxxv, 11 (PL, 33, 815).

⁷⁵ PL, 112, 1064.

a brief outline, but the argument is clear enough.

Not only are physical buildings important, but the act of building is itself significant as a sign of either actual or supposed strength. The most notable positive examples of this we have already in some measure discussed. Hroðgar builds Heorot because he is a strong king. The poet says,

Ða ic wide gefrægn weorc gebannam
manigre mægbe geond þisne middangeard,
folcstede frætwan (Beowulf, 74-76a),

and the fact that Hroðgar can summon the people of "many nations" to build his mead hall indicates his power. The Danish king's glory, as indicated in the passage quoted above, is strongly reminiscent of Solomon's, of whom it is said,

Elegitque rex Salomon operarios de omni
Israel, et erat indictio triginta millia
virorum (3 Kings 5:13).

Similarly significant is the poet's close juxtaposition of the account of the building of Heorot (64-85) with the scop's song of Creation (90b-98). As God has created the world of men, so has Hroðgar created the "world" of Denmark, symbolized in his stately hall, and his act repeats the cosmogony, just as does Solomon's building of the temple. Hroðgar's implicit control over the people of "many nations" mirrors the control that God has by merit of having "lif eac gesceop cynna gehwylcum" (97b-8a).

Lee notes that in the poem

acts of strength, of superabundance, and
of creativity are constantly pushed back
into that legendary earlier and better
time indicated by the hoary phrase in

geardagum,⁷⁶

and the in geardagum of the epic reflects the general tendency of myths to take place in illo tempore, in some remote "beginning," whence all mortal activities derive their meaning. St. Augustine tells us that it is the beginning to which we must return, and for him, this "beginning" or principium is Christ, the source of all wisdom and knowledge.⁷⁷

As with Hroðgar, Guthlac's ability to establish a dwelling on what was originally the fiends' territory indicates that his strength is superior to theirs. There are a pair of interesting parallels to the story of Guthlac and the fiends, both of which are cited by Bede. The first is the story of Cedd, of whom Bede relates,

elegit sibi locum monasterii construendi in montibus arduis ac remotis; in quibus latronum magis latibula ac lustra ferarum, quam habitacula fuisse videbantur hominum: ut, juxta prophetiam Isaiae, in cubilibus, in quibus prius dracones habitabant, oriretur viror calami et junci, id est, fructus bonorum operum ibi nascerentur, ubi prius vel bestiae commorari, vel homines bestialiter vivere consueverant.⁷⁸

⁷⁶ Guest-Hall, p. 212. For more on the building of Heorot as a reflection of cosmogonic myth, see pp. 178-80.

⁷⁷ Confessiones, xi, 7, 10 (PL, 32, 813). For the archetypal significance of illud tempus, without the knowledge of which one cannot understand life in the present, as without understanding the origin of any "thing," one cannot understand its function and meaning, see Eliade, The Sacred and the Profane, pp. 75-81, Patterns, p. 396, and Jung and Kerényi, pp. 4-8. This correspondence accounts for the importance of the cosmogony to all later creative situations.

⁷⁸ Historia Ecclesiastica, iii, 23 (PL, 95, 154B).

The "dracones" of Isaiah's prophecy are directly analogous to Guthlac's demons, and Cedd's having chosen such a wild spot for his monastery is analogous to God's having brought order out of chaos in the cosmogony. The second, and more significant, example is the story of Cuthbert's removal from Lindisfarne to the solitary island of Farne, of which Bede speaks in these terms:

Nullus hanc facile ante famulum Domini
Cudberctum solus valebat inhabitare colonus,
propter videlicet demorantium ibi phantasias
daemonum; verum intrante eam milite Christi
armato galea salutis, scuto fidei, et gladio spiritus,
quod est verbum Dei, et omnia tela nequissimi
ignea extincta, et ipse nequissimus cum omni
satellitum suorum turba porro fugatus est hostis.
Qui videlicet miles Christi, ut devicta tyrannorum
acie monarchus terrae quam adierat factus est,
condidit civitatem suo aptam imperio, et domos
in hac aeque civitati congruas erexit.⁷⁹

The similarities between this latter passage and the Guthlac story are obvious. Cuthbert's "daemones" are the same as Guthlac's, and as Cuthbert puts on the panoply of God, so Guthlac "Gyrede hine georne mid gæstlicum wæpnum" (Guthlac A, 177-8a), with the ensuing struggle bringing about, in both cases, the flight of the demons. Most important, however, in the present context, is the fact that Cuthbert "condidit civitatem suo aptam imperio," and the act of building is a manifestation of his strength in the same way as it is for Guthlac. These two stories come from identical thought-worlds.

The relation of the Guthlac story to the cosmogony

⁷⁹ Vita S. Cuthberti, xvii (PL, 94, 757B). See also Historia Ecclesiastica, iv, 28 (PL, 95, 222).

is made explicit in the account of the Creation and Fall at the beginning of Guthlac B (819-78a). The poem opens,

Ðæt is wide cuð wera cneorissum,
folcum gefræge, þætte frymþa god
þone ærestan ælda cynnes
of þære clænestan, cynning ælmihtig,
foldan geworhte. Ða wæs fruma niwe
ælda tudres, onstæl wynlic,
fæger ond gefeallic (819-25a),

and this is parallel to the opening of the passage which directly follows the account of the Fall.

Us secgað bec
hu Guðlac wearð þurh godes willan
eadig on Engle. He him ece geceas
meaht ond mundbyrd. Mære wurdon
his wundra geweorc wide ond side,
breme æfter burgum geond Bryten innan (878b-83).

One of Guthlac's most notable "wundra geweorc" is his victory over the demons and the construction of his isolated dwelling, and both he and God are "wide cuð" for their respective acts of creation. The cosmogony was a "fruma niwe ælda tudres," just as Guthlac's removal to and possession of Crowland constitutes, more tropologically, a "new beginning" to his spiritual life. This change in his spiritual life is analogous to the process of baptism, which is traditionally seen as a victory over the serpent in the baptismal pool, and this is iconographically expressed in his victory over the demons. Water is the traditional home of such creatures, and their existence represents the chaos of the sea of this world as well as the lack of knowledge of the uninitiated. All this reflects the cosmogony, in which God brought the earth forth from the chaos of the waters.

The intervening passage contributes as well to the

homeland/building theme in the Guthlac poems. Note particularly lines 852-57a:

Sibban se eþel uðgenge wearð
 Adame ond Euan, eardwica cyst
 beorht oðbroden, ond hyra bearnum swa,
 eaferum æfter, þa hy on uncyððu,
 scomum scudende, scofene wurdon
 on gewinworuld.

The exile of Adam and Eve is similar to that of Guthlac's demons, who are also forced to wander widely, without a homeland. The "gewinworuld," where Adam and Eve, all their descendants, and the demons must dwell, is in marked contrast to Guthlac's abode, which is a resting place from strife and typologically related to heaven. The references to Eden (825-7a et passim), from which Adam and Eve were expelled, and to heaven (Guthlac A, 584), reinforce this. A similar contrast is that, whereas Adam and Eve fell through sin, through going "ofer word godes" (848b), Guthlac became "eadig on Engle." He is a special exception among the race of men, understanding the location and nature of his true homeland, and this is expressed in his role as builder.

So also, the Phoenix constructs a house "in þam westenne ofer heanne beam" (Phoenix, 201b-02a), an act which is emblematic of the bird's immortality. This dwelling, like Guthlac's barrow, is typologically related to heaven, and we have already noted (pp. 220-21) its allegorical interpretation as the dwelling one constructs for oneself in heaven by performing good deeds on earth. Compared to heaven, this world is a "westen," and the bird's building in such a place is analogous to the simi-

lar choice of location which Guthlac, Cedd, and Cuthbert all make. That the Phoenix's dwelling is an "eardwic niwe" (431b) indicates both the cosmogonic significance of the act, and the new beginning which each of us will have in the heavenly kingdom. Another positive expression of this theme of building appears at the beginning of Christ I (2-17), where Christ's ability as builder is meant to be a metaphoric representation of his might, just as the image of Christ repairing the temple of the body in John 2:18-21 is meant to indicate his supremacy over the Jews who question him. They can destroy his earthly body, but he will still be resurrected. On a slightly different level, the building of a temple is the logical end of the conversion process, as in Andreas (1632-5) and Elene (1006-22), and in each of these poems it comes to symbolize the spiritual strength that the converted barbarians have gained. In the latter case, Elene's building her church on Calvary--"on pam beorh-hliðe" (1008a)--reinforces the archetypal nature of the act. That the church is on an elevated place, indicates the transcendence of this world which the building of such an edifice naturally implies, and Calvary is the cardinal point of the universe, from which Christ's soul departed for heaven. As in all our other examples, this refers back to the cosmogony, and Lee notes that the moment when a church is founded implies the Creation, transforming a heathen world into a Christian one.⁸⁰

⁸⁰ Guest-Hall, pp. 94-5. A similar example appears in Bede, Historia Ecclesiastica, ii, 14 (PL, 95, 105BC), where

Pious building is an act of worship, and the author of Ecclesiasticus, for example, speaking of "omnis faber et architectus," says,

Omnes hi in manibus suis speraverunt, Et unusquisque in arte sua sapiens est. Sine his omnibus non aedificatur civitas. Et non inhabitabunt, nec inambulabunt, Et in ecclesiam non transilient. Super sellam iudicis non sedebunt, Et testamentum iudicii non intelligent, Neque palam facient disciplinam et iudicium Et in parabolis non inveniuntur; Sed creaturam aevi confirmabunt; et deprecatio illorum in operatione artis, Accommodantes animam suam, Et conquirentes in lege Altissimi (Ecclus. 38: 35-9).

There are also acts of building, however, where the strength of the builder is only suppositious. The most notable case is that of Satan in Genesis B.

Feala worda gespæc
se engel ofermodes. Pohte þurh his anes cræft
hu he him strenglicran stol geworhte,
heahran on heofonum; cwæð þæt hine his hige
speone
þæt he west and norð wyrcean ongunne,
trymede getimbro; cwæð him tweo þuhte
þæt he gode wolde geongra weorðan (271a-77).

In the middle of the discussion of Satan's pride, the poet relates that he built a building, and this is the first step Satan takes in the assertion of what he considers to be his own superior strength. Rather than being a temple, or a place dedicated to God, like Guthlac's barrow, it is a place built to spite God. Essentially, it is ofermod extrapolated into action and is a fitting symbol for Satan's ultimately fated hubris. The poet of Christ and Satan relates the same story.

Pa Satanus swearte gepohte

King Edwin of Northumbria is baptized and then bids a church be built, first of wood and then of stone.

þæt he wolde on heofonum hehseld wyrcean
uppe mid þam ecan (370-72a),

and the fallen angels who participated in the deed lament
their plan to establish a home in heaven and deprive
Christ of his power.

Godes andsacan
hweorfan geond helle hate onæled
ufan and utan (him wæs æghwær wa),
witum werige, wuldres bescyrede,
dreamum bedælde. Heofon deop gehygd,
þa heo on heofonum ham staðelodon,
þæt hie woldon benæman nergendne Crist
rodera rices, ah he on riht geheold
hired heofona and þæt halige seld (339b-47).

Their dwelling in hell is the direct inverse of the
dwelling they had originally hoped to construct and is
the objective sign of the futility of opposing God. This
is made explicit in the two Genesis poems. Satan wishes
to take over the "ham and heahsetl heofena rices" (Gene-
sis A, 33), so "to leane," God fashions him a "wræclīcne
ham" (37), and Satan's experience is paradigmatic--

Swa deð monna gehwīlc
þe wið his waldend winnan ongynneð
mid mane wið þone mæran drihten (Genesis B, 297b-9a).

A second example of suppositious strength demonstrated
in the act of building is the city which Cain builds in
Genesis A (1056-60). It is the first city among men
(1059-60) and indicates the expansion and growing power
of Cain's race, yet it is only earthly and consequently
doomed to transience. St. Augustine comments on the dif-
ference between Cain, who built a city, and Abel, who did
not.

Scriptum est itaque de Cain, quod condi-
derit civitatem: Abel autem tanquam pere-
grinus non condidit. Superna est enim
sanctorum civitas, quamvis hic pariat

cives, in quibus peregrinatur, donec regni
eius tempus adveniat, cum congregatura est
omnes in suis corporibus resurgentes,
quando eis promissum dabitur regnum, ubi
cum suo principe Rege saeculorum sine ullo
temporis fine regnabunt.⁸¹

In mere earthly terms, Cain, having built a city, would seem to be stronger, but Abel's homeland, and his strength, are above. A third example is the building of the Tower of Babel (Genesis A, 1661-1701). The people here are "mærdæ georne" (1677b) and conceive of building a city and a tower to heaven in order to demonstrate their strength. They build them "for wlenche and for wonhygdum" (1673), and ultimately they are prevented in the attempt, since they are trying to give expression to a strength, just like Satan's or Cain's, which they do not in fact possess. They cannot reach heaven simply because it is not open to "manfremmendum," just as Satan cannot build a throne in heaven higher than God's, simply because it is impossible to transcend God. Similarly, in the Old English Daniel, the poet relates that Nebuchadnezzar built a city "to wurðmyndum" (609b)--"for honor"--and tells of Nebuchadnezzar's overweening pride. He first indicates this by saying,

Ongan ða gyddigan þurh gylp micel
Caldea cyning þa he ceastergeweorc,
Babilone burh, on his blæde geseah (598-600),

and then goes on to say that Nebuchadnezzar was "ana on oferhyð ofer ealle men" (614). But his glory also is only transitory and a sign of mere earthly power.

The common motivation behind all these negative acts

⁸¹ De civitate Dei, xv, 1 (PL, 41, 438).

of building brings us to an important point--the notion of pride as characterizing the earthly city, composed of Satan and all those who follow him. The references to Satan's pride in the corpus of Old English poetry are so common as to make documentation superfluous, and he is commonly called simply "se engel ofermodes." Augustine says of man,

incertusque futurorum, et illicitas cohibere laetitias, et maxime superbiam, cuius persuasione dejectus est, et quo uno vitio misericordiae medicina respuitur, frangere consuevit. Quid enim tam opus habens misericordia quam miser? Et quid tam indignum misericordia quam superbus miser?⁸²

Augustine even relates of his own experience that he was separated from God by his pride.⁸³ Thus hell, the locus of Satan and his myrmidons, is the "wloncra winsele" (Christ and Satan, 93a). We have defined these members of the earthly city in terms of their acts of building, and the prophet Esdras, speaking to the people, refers to the adornment of cities and houses as a futile act of hubris (4 Esdras 16:40-50; esp. v. 47).⁸⁴ This is all in contrast to the ethos of martyrdom and asceticism, which dictates a complete deadness to the things of this world and looks instead to the civitas Dei and the life to come. Relevant in this context is Hroðgar's Sermon, the latter half of which (Beowulf, 1739b-84) deals with the

⁸² De libero arbitrio, iiii, 10, 29 (PL, 32, 1286).

⁸³ Confessiones, vii, 7, 11 (PL, 32, 740).

⁸⁴ Edgar J. Goodspeed, The Apocrypha: An American Translation (New York: Modern Library, 1959), p. 104. This only appears in the oriental versions, and is not included by Charles.

sin of pride. After describing wherein the sin of pride consists, Hroðgar tells Beowulf,

Bebeorh þe ðone bealonið, Beowulf leofa
secg betsta, ond þæt þæt selre geceos,
ece rædas; oferhyda ne gym,
mære cempa! Nu is þines mægnas blæd
ane hwile; eft sona bið,
þæt þec adl oððe ecg eafopes getwæfeð,
oððe fyres feng, oððe flodes wylm,
oððe gripe meces, oððe gares fliht,
oððe atol ylðo; oððe eagenas bearhtm
forsiteð ond forsworced; semninga bið,
þæt ðec, dryhtguma, deað oferswyðeð (1758-68).

Beowulf should choose "ece rædas," since the glory of earthly might lasts only for a short space and can be suddenly cut off by any number of means. Then the Danish king points to his own experience as an example.

Swa ic Hring-Dena hund missera
weold under wolcnum ond hig wigge beleac
manigum mægþa geond þysne middangeard,
æscum ond ecgum, þæt ic me ænigne
under swegles begong gesacan ne tealde.
Hwæt, me þæs on eple edwenden cwom,
gyrn æfter gomene, seopðam Grendel wearð,
ealdgewinna, ingenga min;
ic þære socne singales wæg
modceare micle. þæs sig Metode þanc,
ecean Dryhtne, þæs ðe ic on aldre gebad,
þæt ic on þone hafelan heorodreorigne
ofer eald gewin eagam starige! (1769-81).

In effect, Hroðgar is here admitting that he himself committed the sin of pride, trusting in his own strength until "ic me ænigne under swegles begong gesacan ne tealde." In Germanic terms, he was an admirable king, and the poet later says of him, "þæt wæs an cynning æghwæs orleahre" (1885b-6a). The statement, however, finishes,

op þæt hine ylðo benam
mægenes wynnum, se þe oft manegum scod
(1886b-7),

and the situation becomes clear. The king's "blameless-

ness" is still defined in terms of the possession of strength--a strictly this-worldly attribute, subject to decay and very much "under swegles begong." This is in contrast to the "ece rædas"--eternal counsels--which he bids Beowulf seek, and which look to another sphere altogether.

Hitherto, we have spoken of the building of Heorot as a positive act, but in the light of these considerations, it is perhaps wise to reexamine the significance of the Danes' mead-hall. ^{Goldsmith} Margaret, who interprets Beowulf generally as "a microcosm of the story of carnal man,"⁸⁵ sees Heorot in extremely negative terms. First, she discusses the "hart" symbolism of the hall and contends that although this initially seems to connote royalty, the stance of such an animal, with its spreading antlers, would suggest pride to the medieval fabulist, and its finally being trapped by them would cause the moralist to think of pride as its undoing. She also contends that the passing of the cup--related to the cup later stolen from the dragon's hoard--in the hall's festivities brings to mind Adam's poculum mortis, and as such, is a symbol of cupidity. Likewise, "the cracks in the fabric of Heorot [cf. 997-1000] are an image of the treacherous hatreds which are already--to judge by the setting and tone of Wealtheow's speech (1162-91)--making rifts in the concord of kinsmen."⁸⁶ Heorot also shelters

⁸⁵ Goldsmith, Mode and Meaning, p. 248. For most of what follows on the significance of Heorot, see pp. 83-6.

⁸⁶ Ibid., p. 86.

fratricides such as Unferð, the spiritual descendants of Cain. She notes the significance of Cain's having built the first city and then cites Bede's interpretation of Genesis 4:17, in which this fact is recorded, to the effect that this city implies the "spes tota pravorum," which is attached solely to the kingdom of this world.⁸⁷ This "spes tota" is the "hæpenra hyht" of the Danes, and "the spirit of Cain occupies the hall in an allegorical sense as the skulking presence of Grendel haunts it in the historical narrative."⁸⁸ The clarity of her arguments--however ill-reflected in our present exposition of them--and the weight of the scholarship with which she backs them up, are compelling, although it seems that she makes her case a bit too strongly. Heorot, like Solomon's temple, demonstrates the glory of its builder, and like Solomon's temple, it is destroyed, being only earthly and a symbol, if you like, of the transience of the things of this world, but it nonetheless looks toward something better. It is an imago mundi, and as "the spirit of Cain rules the hall," so does Satan rule in this world, but in neither case does that preclude the possibility of transcendence, of there being something "beyond." A telling contrast in the poem is that of the glorious Heorot, flawed as it may be, and Grendel's mere. The first of these is a reflection of heaven, as the second is a reflection of hell, and the Danes' mead-hall is only imper-

⁸⁷ PL, 91, 72; Goldsmith, p. 112.

⁸⁸ Goldsmith, p. 112.

fect as all earthly things are imperfect. Beowulf, whose role as a Christ-figure in the poem we have already discussed,⁸⁹ saves Heorot from its initial difficulties, and the tribulations that follow are analogous to the ongoing battle with Satan which continues after the death of Christ. Its final destruction, mirroring the return to chaos which is promised after the death of Beowulf in the poem, is only analogous to the final destruction of all temporal things, giving way to God's New Creation, which will be without strife. Brodeur is right when he says that the tragedy of Beowulf is that human strength is not enough--

in all that human strength, courage, and wisdom may achieve, he is victorious; but against God's foreknowledge neither human might nor human wisdom may prevail⁹⁰--

yet it must not be forgotten that Beowulf goes to the "soðfæstra dom" (2820b). In the course of his development, Beowulf has gained vital knowledge and has become a "lagucræftig mon," skillful at handling the problems of this life, and this is what qualifies him for going to the "glory of the righteous." Before his last encounter, he is completely reconciled to being ruled by fate, the arm of God (cf. 2524b-27a), and his death is that of the proto-Christian martyr. This is why his tumulus can stand as a "becn" (3160a) for travellers on the sea of this world. Both Hroðgar and Beowulf are

⁸⁹ See above, pp. 108-11 et passim.

⁹⁰ Arthur Gilchrist Brodeur, The Art of Beowulf (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1959), p. 244.

heroes in this life, and Alvin Lee does well to note

the Old English poetic sense of redemption and heroic activity as a restoration of an originally ideal order of Creation. As with the emergence of a new Creation out of Noah's Deluge or of the green fields in the depths of the Red Sea...heroic deeds in the abyss make visible again the order of the world as God intended it to be.⁹¹

Goldsmith is correct in seeing the other portion of the dualism of Heorot, but she mistakes in not perceiving the underlying Christian perspective of the work as pointing even so to another world. Beowulf may indeed be "a microcosm of the story of carnal man," but the earthly city is only one half of the cosmic picture, both sides of which are presented in the poem.

In all this we have, once again, the contrast of heaven and earth, and whereas Heorot and Beowulf's hall are both destroyed, the Guthlac-poet says, speaking of heaven, "Ðæt sind þa getimbru þe no tydriað" (Guthlac A, 18). Similarly, the Lord tells Esdras that no building constructed by men could stand in the place of the Heavenly City (4 Esdras 10:53-4).⁹² Paul speaks of the difference between the heavenly and earthly countries (cf. Heb. 11:10-16), and this dichotomy reaches its highest expression in Augustine's De civitate Dei. Jesus, referring to the rock which is himself--or in other words, to the foundation stone of the Heavenly City--says,

Et qui ceciderit super lapidem istum, confringetur: super quem vero ceciderit, conteret eum (Mt. 21:44).

⁹¹ Guest-Hall, p. 67.

⁹² Charles, II, p. 607.

Here the distinction is clear. Whereas men are broken upon lapidem istum, the stones from which the buildings of this world are constructed crumble themselves, and the superstructures fall into ruins. The Wanderer starts out looking for an earthly "synces bryttan" (Wanderer, 25b), but when he becomes snottor on mode, he realizes that the only stability is to be found in heaven (114-15). In the meantime, he senses the transitory nature of all mundane things (73-110). Of particular interest in relation to our theme of building is the Wanderer's statement that,

Woriað þa winsalo, waldend licgað
dreame bidrorene, dugub eal gecrong,
wlonc bi wealle (78-80a).

The warriors' falling "bi wealle" directly associates their fate with that of their buildings,⁹³ and the wall of line 80 is reflected in the "weal wundrum heah" (98a), which is now the only remnant of the dugub. Its ruin is emblematic of their own, and the description of the storms which follows (101-05) is in contrast to the "fæstnung" of heaven (115). It is significant that they were "wlonc," since once again, pride is the chief characteristic of the earthly city, and all structures founded on love of self, rather than on the love of God, are doomed to failure and destruction. The situation in The Seafarer is the same, and the Seafarer says,

⁹³ Cf. Roy F. Leslie, ed., The Wanderer (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1966), p. 83: "...however the next three lines are interpreted, there is no difficulty about taking the direct meaning, namely that the men all fell beside the wall, so that their fate is associated with the fate of their buildings and the warriors are thought of as perishing in defence of their city."

Forþon him gelyfeð lyt, se þe ah lifes wyn
gebiden in burgum, bealosipa hwon,
wlonc ond wingal, hu ic werig oft
in brimlade bidan sceolde (27-30).

The people here, as in The Wanderer, are "wlonc," and the "cities" of which he speaks are only a representation of the earthly city. For him,

dryhtnes dreamas
laene on londe

Forþon me hatran sind
bonne þis deade lif,
(64b-6a).

and here also, "Gedroren is þeos duguð eal, dreamas [=mere earthly joys] sind gewitene" (86). The earthly comitatus is in opposition to the dugub of heaven, where the pleasures of this world will be eschatologically enjoyed (cf., for example, Dream of the Rood, 139b-41). This contrast between the transient and the eternal is made throughout the corpus of Old English poetry, as throughout all Christian thought, and we have only cited The Wanderer and The Seafarer as the two most notable examples. Another passage to cite would be the concluding section of Elene (see esp. 1269-1321). So in Juliana is the spaciousness of Maximian's kingdom (cf. Juliana, 8b-10) a direct counterpoint to the spaciousness of God's kingdom, in which Juliana is much more interested, and in the poem generally, Cynewulf makes a strong contrast between worldly wealth and divine blessings.

This difference also expresses itself in the difference between God's creation and man's, and as Hroðgar establishes the Danish court, represented by Heorot, so is God the builder of our homeland--of both the temporary eðel we have here on earth and our true homeland above.

Paul phrases the distinction thus:

Omnis namque domus fabricatur ab aliquo:
qui autem omnia creavit, Deus est (Heb. 3:4).

God's act in Creation varies in kind from that of man, since he did not simply form one body from another, as man would do, but created the substance as well. So also is there a contrast in the respective motives of man and God. The members of the earthly city build through love of self, but God did not create anything out of need or otherwise than out of his own goodness and for the benefit of his creatures.⁹⁴ Thus, anyone who builds out of selfless love of God, as does Guthlac, is directly imitating the divine creative act, and so only does Guthlac's dwelling on the barrow--and indeed, his whole life--take on meaning. As Alvin Lee puts it,

Creativity, or any significant action, for the Anglo-Saxon Christian, involves being responsive to the Creator's revelation of himself and his works and then going on to "shape" things--damascened swords, gold circlets, timbered halls, illuminated manuscripts, jeweled crosses, poems--that commemorate the mighty acts of God. Only in this way does man in middle-earth have contact with reality or vest his life with meaning.⁹⁵

Neil D. Isaacs recognizes this in his interpretation of The Order of the World and says that, within the context of the poem,

it is only the poets who may approach the nature of the divine by mastering the art of creation...In the beginning, in short,

⁹⁴ Augustine, Confessiones, xiii, 2, 2 (PL, 32, 845), and Hilary, Tractatus super Psalmos, ii, 14 (PL, 9, 269BC).

⁹⁵ Guest-Hall, pp. 116-17.

was the word, and it is in his devotion to the word that the scop may partake of the nature of divine creator.⁹⁶

The connection between the heavenly and earthly homelands is made in Christ the Word, and his act of caritas in coming to earth, which he himself created, is paradigmatic. In Christ III, Jesus says,

Ic was on worulde wædla þæt ðu wurde welig
 in heofonum,
 earm ic was on eðle þinum þæt þu wurde eadig
 on minum (1495-6).

He was wretched in our homeland that we might be happy in his, and by following his example, we may come to the "engla eþelstol" (Christ I, 52a) where Christ takes his dwelling. The battle against the devil is rewarded by a place in the Heavenly City, and this is metaphorically reflected in the Old English Judith. Bethulia, like the New Jerusalem, is a "beorhtan byrig" (326a), and it is thither that the Israelites return after their victory over Holofernes and his Assyrians (323b-30), who are clearly the offspring and representatives of Satan, just as Judith is a type of Christ. It is through her wise teaching that the people are victorious (331-4a), and all men rejoice when she has returned "to eðle" (166b-70). Thus the poet demonstrates the efficacy of adhering to the things of God in this life.

Christ, who rules over the Heavenly City, is also the lapis angularis--the "head of the corner."⁹⁷ The

⁹⁶ Structural Principles, pp. 77, 80.

⁹⁷ Mt. 21:42, Mk. 12:10, Acts 4:11; cf. Ps. 117:22, Dan. 2:34. This is reflected in Christ I, 2-17.

superstructure raised up on this foundation is the Church, composed of men, and each man individually is conceived of as a temple, deriving his meaning from that greater temple which is Christ. Already by New Testament times was this tradition well established. Jesus says, "Ecce enim regnum Dei intra vos est" (Lk. 17:21), and in 1 Corinthians we read, "Dei aedificatio estis" (3:9) and

Nescitis quia templum Dei estis, et Spiritus Dei habitat in vobis? Si quis autem templum Dei violaverit, disperdet illum Deus. Templum enim Dei sanctum est, quod estis vos (3:16-17).⁹⁸

Peter refers to men as "lapides vivi" (1 Pet. 2:5), from which is built up a "domus spiritualis," the "sacerdotium sanctum," and just as Jesus speaks of the temple of his body, which is to become the temple of the New Jerusalem, so does this temporal/eschatological contrast become applied to men.

Scimus enim quoniam si terrestris domus nostra huius habitationis dissolvatur, quod aedificationem ex Deo habemus, domum non manufactum, aeternam in caelis (2 Cor. 5:1).

Similarly, Luke speaks of the "tabernaculum David" (Acts 15:16), which refers to the patriarch's family or race. We find this sort of symbolism already in the Old Testament, and Tobias says,

Confitere Domino in bonis tuis, Et benedic Deum saeculorum, Ut reaedificet in te tabernaculum suum, Et revocet ad te omnes captivos, Et gaudeas in omnia saecula saeculorum (Tob. 13:12).

In a like manner, Esdras urges the people to correct themselves, using the metaphor of putting one's house in

⁹⁸ See also 1 Cor. 6:19, 2 Cor. 6:16, and 2 Pet. 1:14.

order (4 Esdras 14:13).⁹⁹ In archaic religions as well, one's body is analogous to a house, a temple, or the cosmos itself, and man inhabits his body in the same way as he inhabits a house or the world.¹⁰⁰ The tradition carries forth from the New Testament into the Fathers. Thus St. Augustine says,

Nemo enim vult corrumpi habitaculum suum:
non ergo debet corrumpere habitaculum Dei,
seipsum scilicet,¹⁰¹

and he speaks further of the "domus Dei," built by Christ, not of wood or stone, but of men. This house

et nos aedificamus bene vivendo, et Deus
ut bene vivamus opitulando: quia nisi
Dominus aedificaverit domum, in vanum
laborabunt aedificantes eam.¹⁰²

Related to this notion of the individual as the micro-cosmic temple of God is the idea that "hominis domum initium sive particula debet esse civitatis" and that therefore good civic rule is the result of good domestic rule,¹⁰³ thus homologizing house, ruled by an individual man, and cosmos. Rabanus, referring to Paul, interprets templum as "corpus nostrum,"¹⁰⁴ and Augustine says that the forty-six years of the building of the temple are to be taken as

⁹⁹ Charles, II, p. 621.

¹⁰⁰ Eliade, The Sacred and the Profane, pp. 172-7.

¹⁰¹ De doctrina, iii, 14, 22 (PL, 34, 74).

¹⁰² De civitate Dei, xvii, 12 (PL, 41, 546). For men as the vivi Ecclesiae lapides, see also Bede, Historia Ecclesiastica, iv, 3 (PL, 95, 176A).

¹⁰³ De civitate Dei, xix, 16 (PL, 41, 644-5).

¹⁰⁴ PL, 112, 1064.

the sign of Christ's human body.¹⁰⁵ Similarly, he relates the temple of God, the human body, the body of Christ, and Noah's ark.¹⁰⁶ In the Old Norse In dedicatione tempeli as well, the homilist, using the same symbolism as that contained in Book Fourteen of Rabanus's De Universo, tells us that the church edifice is analogous, not only to the Church universal, but also to every individual, and the various parts of the building are allegorically interpreted as the various virtues.¹⁰⁷

A ramification of all this is the allegory of the "soul as fortress." Augustine uses the figure at the beginning of the Confessiones, when he says,

Angusta est domus animae meae quo venias
ad eam; dilatetur abs te. Ruinosa est;
refice eam. Habet quae offendant oculos
tuos; fateor et scio: sed quis mundabit
eam? aut qui alteri praeter te clamabo...?¹⁰⁸

and Boethius, speaking of the persecutions of wicked men, says,

At nos desuper irredemus, vilissima rerum
quaeque rapientes, securi totius furiosi
tumultus, eoque vallo muniti, quo gras-
santi stultitiae aspirare fas non sit.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁵ De doctrina, ii, 16, 26 (PL, 34, 49).

¹⁰⁶ See Rahner, "Die Arche Noe," p. 168.

¹⁰⁷ See Turville-Petre, "Old Norse Homily," passim. This is related to Ambrose's interpretation of Paradise--the anagogical reflection of the church building--as the soul, in which the virtues are planted (De paradiso, 2; cited in Daniélou, From Shadows to Reality, p. 63). So elsewhere (De mysteriis, 56) does Ambrose refer to the purified soul as a paradise.

¹⁰⁸ Confessiones, i, 5, 6 (PL, 32, 663).

¹⁰⁹ De consolatione philosophiae, i, Pro. 3 (PL, 63, 609-10).

Other valuable references, mainly from Ambrose, Jerome, and Gregory, are provided by Margaret Goldsmith and James F. Doubleday,¹¹⁰ the latter of whom discusses this theme particularly with reference to its occurrence in the Old English Vainglory (37-9) and Juliana (397b-409). The second of these may usefully be quoted here. Satan, speaking of man, says,

Deah he godes hwæt
onginne gæstlice, ic beo gearo sona,
þæt ic ingehygd eal geondwite,
hu gefæstnad sy ferð innanweard,
wiðsteall geworht. Ic þæs wealles geat
ontyne þurh teonan; bið se torr pyrel,
ingong geopenad, þonne ic ærest him
þurh eargfare in onsende
in breostsefan bitre geþoncas
þurh mislice modes willan,
þæt him sylfum selle þynceð
leahtras to fremman ofer lof godes,
lices lustas.

Just as Guthlac's barrow is both a physical fortress and an expression of his strength, so is the heart of the righteous a fortress against the onslaughts of the devil. The figure of the Christian warrior resisting the arrows of sin is a common one, and according to Doubleday, it was a popular strategy among the Fathers, in describing the fall of an actual city, to describe its sinning as its moral downfall and ruin, for which he cites Jerome and Augustine as notable examples.¹¹¹ In building one's spiritual fortress, one must have Christ as one's foundation.

¹¹⁰ Goldsmith, Mode and Meaning, pp. 194-201; James F. Doubleday, "The Allegory of the Soul as Fortress in Old English Poetry," Anglia, 88 (1970), 503-08.

¹¹¹ Doubleday, p. 505.

Fundamentum enim aliud nemo potest ponere
praeter id quod positum est, quod est
Christus Iesus (1 Cor. 3:11).¹¹²

Paul also speaks of good works as a foundation against the time to come (1 Tim. 6:18-19) and of the "fundamentum poenitentiae" (Heb. 6:1), and both of these find their analogous expression in the plants of the Phoenix-allegory, which are the good works with which we build ourselves a dwelling in heaven. By contrast,

Multigena autem impiorum multitudo non erit utilis, Et spuria vitulina non dabunt radices altas, Nec stabile firmamentum collocabunt. Et si in ramis in tempore germinaverint, Infirmiter posita, a vento commovebuntur, Et a nimietate ventorum eradicabuntur (Sap. 4:3-4).

The wicked, like Guthlac's demons, have no firm foundation--no fixed point to which they can adhere in all extremities.

One's "homeland," whether it be physical or psychological, is the basis of one's security. Hroðgar's thegns can only exist in relation to Heorot, which is the symbol of their society, and so can Guthlac only exist in his dwelling on the barrow, which represents the consecration of his life to God and the forsaking of earthly pleasures. Outside of one's homeland, there is chaos, and this chaos is always trying to impose itself on the ordered existence of one's world.¹¹³ Grendel and his

¹¹² Cf. Col. 2:7, 2 Tim. 2:19; also Augustine, De civitate Dei, xxi, 26 (PL, 41, 743-6), PL, 37, 1560; Jerome, PL, 24, 471; Paulinus of Nola, PL, 61, 309; and Gregory, PL, 76, 456, 938-9.

¹¹³ Kathryn Hume, "The Concept of the Hall in Old English Poetry," ASE, 3 (1974), 63-74, sees the hall in Old English poetry as a positive existential metaphor and

mother, who attempt to disrupt the society of Heorot, are the forces of chaos in Beowulf. In Guthlac A, the widely wandering fiends are the ones who try to undermine the order of Guthlac's existence. In Judith, the chaos and misery of Holofernes and his myrmidons is contrasted with the well regulated life of Bethulia, and the Assyrians are trying to impose their own way of life, which is ultimately chaos, on the people of Judith's tribe, in this instance by military incursion. In Genesis B, Satan tries to impose his own sense of order on God. In each of these cases, the homeland must be actively defended, or it cannot survive as the source of stability and identity by which a man will order his existence. The defense of one's homeland is, in essence, the suppression of disorder. Grendel and his mother must be sought out and combated, or the society represented by life at Heorot could not continue, and so it is in the other examples we have cited. In early times, city walls were looked upon as a magic defense, shutting out chaos, wholly apart from their later military function,¹¹⁴ and one can see the failure of such defenses in The Wanderer, where the walls stand ruined, beaten upon by the storms (Wanderer, 97-105). On a more clearly allegorical level, Juliana defends herself with the lorica iustitiae against the attacks of Eleusius, and consequently, she does not

sees, contrastingly, the chaos outside of one's hall-related world as possessing the nature of an "anti-hall," the associations of which can be invoked in characterizing gloomy or negative states of existence.

¹¹⁴ Eliade, Patterns, p. 371.

share his guilt or the final misery of his death.

The concept of the opposition of order and disorder leads naturally enough to a discussion of exile, which is essentially the lack, or inverse, of the joys of the homeland. Thus, during the depredations of Grendel, it is sufficient for the poet to say,

Swa rixode ond wið rihte wan,
ana wið eallum, oð þæt idel stod
husa selest (Beowulf, 144-6a),

in order to indicate the troubles in the society. The "idleness" of the hall indicates a retrogression to chaos. We have already noted Klaeber's contention that the description of Heorot as "idel ond unnyt" (413a) may reflect the "terra...inanis et vacua" of Gen. 1:1,¹¹⁵ and the poet of the Old English Genesis A uses the same expression in speaking of the chaos which preceded creation.

Ne wæs her þa giet nympe heolstersceado
wiht geworden, ac þes wida grund
stod deop and dim, drihtne fremde,
idel and unnyt (Genesis A, 103-06a).

The Wanderer uses similar language in referring to the transitory nature of earthly things--

Ypde swa þisne eardgeard ælda scyppend
oppæt burgwara breahtra lease
eald enta geweorc idlu stodon (Wanderer, 85-7)--

and he later concludes, "eal þis eorþan gesteal idel weorþeð" (110). So Wiglaf, in predicting the unpromising future of the Geatish nation, says,

londrihtes mot
þære mægburge monna æghwylc
idel hweorfan, syððan æðelingas
feorran gefricgean fleam eowerne,
domleasan dæd (Beowulf, 2886b-90a).

¹¹⁵ See above, p. 232.

"Idleness" is symptomatic of an inverted order of the world, of an unfamiliar pattern of society, lacking in hall-joys. An interesting analogue is John's description of the fall of Babylon, a metaphor for the fall of this world.

Et vox citharoedorum, et musicorum, et
tibia canentium, et tuba non audietur in te
amplius: et omnis artifex omnis artis non
invenietur in te amplius: et vox molae non
audietur in te amplius (Apoc. 18:22).

The Germanic exile is one who has been cast out through improper conduct and who now, having no-one to defend him or to avenge him after his death, totally lacks security. Outside of Old English, this is reflected in the Icelandic Family Sagas, where outlawry is the penalty attached to multifarious crimes, and in which the outlaw is forced to leave his home and can be killed without the necessity of vengeance. The most extensive treatment of this theme in Old Icelandic is Grettis saga, and Grettir's whole tragedy is that of a man who must exist perpetually outside of society, in a world where society is the only viable source of personal definition. In Christian terms, just as Adam was exiled because of sin, so are we all exiles through Adam's fall. God is analogous to the Germanic lord, and whereas the Germanic exile is separated from an earthly lord, so are men on earth separated from God--"dum sumus in corpore, peregrinamur a Domino" (2 Cor. 5:6). After the Fall, Adam and Eve had to give up "eðles wyn" (Phoenix, 411b). The Exodus-poet refers to this world as a "gystsele" (535a), and the homilist of the Blickling Book well summarizes

the situation of men on earth.

we send on þisse worlde ælpeodignesse; we
synd on þisse worlde ælpeodige, & swa
wæron sibbon se æresta ealdor þisses men-
niscan cynnes Godes bebodu abræc; & for-
þon gylte we wæron on þysne wræc-sib
sende, & nu eft sceolon operne eþel secan,
swa wite, swa wuldor, swa we nu geearnian
willap.¹¹⁶

We have already discussed above the "continuative motion" of the exile state, as represented in the case of the Wanderer and the Seafarer by travel on the sea,¹¹⁷ and so Guthlac's demons wander widely, having no eðel, and are unable to find any rest.

 þonan sið tugon
wide waðe, wuldre bescyrede,
lyftlacende...
Ne motun hi on eorþan eardes brucan,
ne hy lyft swefeð in leoma ræstum
 (Guthlac A, 144-6, 220-1).

In the Apocalypse, John speaks in similar language of the ungodly.

nec habent requiem die ac nocte, qui ador-
averunt bestiam, et imaginem eius, et si
quis acceperit characterem nominis eius (Apoc. 14:11).

Pope Gregory, in his letter to the English Church, says that hunger, thirst, heat, cold, and weariness were produced by the Fall of Man,¹¹⁸ and Adam bears this out when he describes his forlorn state in Genesis B (802b-15a). This is the exact inverse of the joys of the homeland,

¹¹⁶ Blickling Homilies, p. 23; cf. Ælfric, Thorpe, I, p. 249. For a discussion of spiritual exile as one of the themes of Christ I, see Stanley B. Greenfield, "The Theme of Spiritual Exile in Christ I," PQ, 32 (1953), 321-8.

¹¹⁷ See above, pp. 68-71.

¹¹⁸ Bede, Historia Ecclesiastica, i, 27 (PL, 95, 63D).

where there is feasting and the fluid interchange of gifts, within a homogeneous and secure social framework. The exile, like Grettir, is isolated. Thus Guthlac's fiends are totally cut off from the presence of God, and the Wanderer, for example, is an "anhaga" and laments,

Oft ic sceolde ana uhtna gehwylce
mine ceare cwipan. Nis nu cwicra nan
þe ic him modsefan minne durre
sweetule asecgan (Wanderer, 8-11a).

As Cherniss rightly notes, "the warrior who is exiled from his tribe has...not lost a dwelling place, but, rather, he has lost a way of life."¹¹⁹ This applies in both pagan and Christian terms, and as the Wanderer and the Seafarer have lost their old way of life in the Germanic mead-hall, so have Adam and Eve lost the pleasures of the prelapsarian Eden and must face the question, "Hwusculon wit nu libban?" (Genesis B, 805a). More importantly, they have become separated from the presence of God, who is the source of all their knowledge and the resolution of the problem of "how to live." Since God is knowledge, exile, for the Christian, is in some sense equivalent to lack of true knowledge. This is demonstrated in Elene, where Cynewulf refers to Judas as an "anhaga" (604b) and where Judas's being cast into the pit (691-708) partakes of many of the stock characteristics of the exile-topos--he is "duguða leas" (693b), he is tormented by hunger, he is bound, and he is exhausted with wounds. Judas here is the representative of the Jewish race--of those who lack all knowledge of the true

¹¹⁹ Cherniss, Ingeld and Christ, p. 103.

faith--and his "exile" in the dry pit is the catalyst for the dawning of knowledge, both for him and for his people. The case is the same for the Wanderer and the Seafarer. They represent all mankind, and their exile on the sea is the necessary pre-condition to becoming snot-tor on mode.

The mention of Judas's imprisonment brings us to another important aspect of the exile-state--the notion of the exile as being bound.¹²⁰ In Elene, it is significant that Judas's prison is "nearwe" (711a), and the association of "narrowness" and nearwe næssas with hell--the ultimate form of imprisonment--is clear.¹²¹ Satan, the ruler of hell, is "susle gebunden" (771b),¹²² and Cynewulf speaks of the Atonement in terms of Christ setting men free from the imprisonment of the devil.

...on galgan wearð godes agen bearn
 ahangen for hergum heardum witum.
 Alysde leoda bearn of locan deofla,
 geomre gastas, ond him gife sealde
 þurh þa ilcan gesceaft þe him geywed wearð
 sylfum on gesyhðe, sigores tacen,
 wið þeode þræce. Ond hu ðy þriddan dæge
 of byrgenne beorna wuldor
 of deaða aras, dryhten ealra
 hæleða cynnes, ond to heofonum astah (179-88).

This is analogous to the raising up of the cross, which is "under neolum niðer næsse gehydde in þeostorcofan" (831-2a), and reflects Christ's having risen from the

¹²⁰ On this point generally, see Thomas Rendall, "Bondage and Freeing from Bondage in Old English Religious Poetry," JEGP, 73 (1974), 497-512.

¹²¹ See above, p. 117.

¹²² Cf. Genesis B, 368-72, and Apoc. 20:1-3. The binding of Satan is a recurrent image in Old English.

tomb. Cynewulf uses the same sort of metaphor when he speaks in the epilogue of his own attainment of the gift of poetry.

Ic was weorcum fah,
synnum asaled, sorgum gewæled,
bitrum gebunden, bisgum bebrungen,
ær me lare onlag þurh leohtne had
gamelum to geoce, gife unscynde
mægencynning amæt ond on gemynd begeat,
torht ontynde, tidum gerymde,
bancofan onband, breostlocan onwand,
leoðucraft onleac. Þæs ic lustum breac,
willum in worlde (1242b-51a).

He was "bound with sins" until he received God's mercy.¹²³

Hroðgar uses an expression similar to that in line 1244 above, when he refers to the unwatchful soul, about to be overtaken by pride, as "bysgum gebunden" (Beowulf, 1743a).

The same theme occurs in Andreas. Matthew "ana sæt" in prison (1007b), and Andreas, in the same situation, is described as an "anhaga" (1351a). Prison is a "gnornhof" (1008b)--a "doleful place"--for Matthew, just as the sea is for the Wanderer and the Seafarer, and both are metaphors for this life. So Lady Philosophy tells Boethius,

Felix qui potuit gravis¹²⁴
Terrae solvere vincula,

and Paul, in discussing the allegory of Abraham's two sons, makes the contrast of heavenly and earthly cities.

Sina enim mons est in Arabia, qui coniunctus est ei quae nunc est Ierusalem, et servit cum filiis suis. Illa autem, quae sursum est Ierusalem, libera est, quae est mater nostra (Gal. 4:25-6).

¹²³ So does Rabanus interpret the "vincula" of Ps. 115: 16 as "peccata" (PL, 112, 1079).

¹²⁴ De consolatione philosophiae, iii, Met. 12 (PL, 63, 782).

The same distinction is made in Andreas when the "heofon-cyninges stefn" comes to Matthew and says,

Ic þe, Matheus, mine sylle
sybbe under swegle. Ne beo ðu on sefan to forht,
ne on mode ne murn. Ic þe mid wunige
ond þe alyse of byssum leoðubendum,
ond ealle þa menigo þe þe mid wuniað
on nearonedum. Þe is neorxnawang,
blæda beorhtost, boldwela fægrost,
hama hyhtlicost, halegum mihtum
torht ontyned. Þær ðu tyres most,
to wídan feore willan brucan (97-106).

Matthew's imprisonment and freeing, then, are to be taken as paradigmatic for all mankind. He is freed by Andreas, who is a clear type of Christ, and the incident is a metaphor for the freeing of all men through the efficacy of the Atonement. Andreas's own later imprisonment, in which he is "bendum fæstne" (1357b), demonstrates the same principle. Satan asks him,

Hwylc is þæs mihtig ofer middangeard,
þæt he þe alyse of leoðubendum,
manna cynnes, ofer mine est? (1372-4),

and Andreas answers,

Hwæt, me eaðe ælmihtig god,
niða neregend, se ðe in niedum iu
gefæstnode fyrnum clommum!
Þær ðu syððan a, susle gebunden,
in wræc wunne, wuldres blunne,
syððan ðu forhogedes heofoncyninges word.
Þær wæs yfles or, ende næfre
þines wræces weorðeð. Ðu scealt wídan feorh
ecan þine yrmðu. Þe bið a symble
of dæge on dæg drohtap strengra (1376-85).

Then the poet adds,

Ða wearð on fleame se ðe ða fæhðo iu
wið god geara grimme gefremede (1386-7).

Satan is right in believing that there is no-one on middle-earth, of which realm he is himself the king, who can free Andreas from his bonds, but he forgets about

God and is the chief representative of those who are secundum hominem. His exile and bondage, unlike Andreas's, will be eternal, and his final flight is emblematic of the victory of Christ over Satan in the sea/prison of this world.

The theme of bondage is also employed in both The Wanderer and The Seafarer. The Wanderer must bind fast his thoughts (Wanderer, 13, 18), and he says,

ðonne sorg ond slæp somod ætgædre
earnne anhogan oft gebindað (39-40).

The "hrið hreosende hrusan bindeð" (102), which is an expression of the transitory nature of earthly things, and the "wapema gebind" (24, 57) indicates the "binding" of the waves, or metaphorically, the strictures which govern earthly life. Such imagery is also apparent in The Seafarer, where the Seafarer's feet are bound with frost (8b-10a), and ice binds the earth (32b), although James H. Wilson has already adequately discussed this theme in the poem.¹²⁵ One could also fruitfully consider the theme of bondage in Christ I or in Juliana, in the latter of which, Juliana's stay in prison is meant to reflect Christ's three-day imprisonment in the tomb, and her final vanquishing of Satan is analogous, once again, to Christ's victory over the devil in the sea of this world. We have already spoken of the opposition of Adam's bonds of sin to Christ's bonds of flesh.¹²⁶ In the first

¹²⁵ Wilson, Christian Theology and Old English Poetry, pp. 92-3.

¹²⁶ See above, p. 198.

Blickling Homily we read,

Pa was gesended þæt goldhord þæs mægen-
 byrmmes on þone bend þæs clænan innoðes,¹²⁷

and just before this, the homilist recounts Gabriel's speech to Mary, in which the angel tells her that she must receive the one who will intercede for Adam's guilt. Not only was Christ bound by the flesh, but he was also "bound" by death, and the Blickling-homilist says that Christ arose

æfter þæm bendum his deapes, & æfter þæm
 clammum helle þeostra; & þæt wite & þæt
 ece wræc asette on þone aldor deofla, &
 mancyn freolsode.¹²⁸

Klaeber points out the recurrent image of the "bonds of death" in Beowulf, for which he cites the relevant passages, as well as numerous analogues from scripture, the Fathers, and the corpus of Old English poetry, and he cites as well the latter of these two passages from the Blickling Homilies.¹²⁹ The forerunner to Christ's death is his being bound to the cross, and this is the act which the Christian must imitate, binding himself fast, like Odysseus, to the mast of the ship of the Church, that he may sail by earthly temptations and arrive in the heavenly homeland. After his death, Christ was imprisoned in the grave, of which the imprisonments of Andreas, Juliana, and all the Christian martyrs are emblematic, and as Christ frees all mankind, so do they become free

¹²⁷ Blickling Homilies, p. 9.

¹²⁸ Ibid., p. 83.

¹²⁹ Klaeber, "Die christlichen Elemente," pp. 465-6.

themselves, able to cast off the strictures of this life. Our actions in this life determine our state in the hereafter. The soul of the sinful man, for instance, tells his body that because of the body's feasting on earth,

...þu me mid þy heardan hungre gebunde
 ond gehæftnedest helle witum!
 (Soul and Body I, 31-2),

and this is in contrast to the words of the righteous man's soul.

Fæstest ðu on foldan ond gefyldest me
 godes lichoman, gæstes drynces (142-3).

In Beowulf, similarly, one is "held fast" by sins. So, for instance, is Grendel bound by his intentions of evil.

Næs hit lengra fyrst,
 ac ymb ane niht eft gefremede
 morðbeala mare, ond no mearn fore,
 fæhðe ond fyrene; wæs to fæst on þam (134b-7).

This implicit lack of freedom is only the precursor to the eternal imprisonment which Grendel and all members of the earthly city will finally have to face. An interesting analogue here is Bede's story of the young soldier Imma, who could not be chained because his brother, thinking him dead, said daily masses for his soul, and Bede uses this to demonstrate the efficacy of saying masses for the dead, who will similarly be freed from torments in the after-life.¹³⁰

As the sea is a metaphor for postlapsarian existence, so is stormy and wintry weather.¹³¹ This is discernible in such poems as The Wanderer and The Seafarer,

¹³⁰ Historia Ecclesiastica, iv, 22 (PL, 95, 205-08).

¹³¹ See generally B.K. Martin, "Aspects of Winter in Latin and Old English Poetry," JEGP, 68 (1969), 375-90.

and adverse climatic conditions are often expressed in terms of bondage. In The Wanderer, the "hrið hreosende" (102a) binds the earth, and the Seafarer's feet are "forste gebunden" (9b). An extensive expression of this metaphoric correspondence appears in Andreas.

Ða se halga wæs under heolstorscuwan,
 eorl ellenheard, ond lange niht
 searopancum beseted. Snaw eorðan band
 wintergeworpum. Weder coledon
 heardum hægelscurum, swylce hrim ond forst,
 hare hildstapan, hæleða eðel
 lucon, leoda gesetu. Land wæron freorig
 cealdum cylegicelum, clang wæteres brym
 ofer eāstreamas, is brycgade
 blæce brimrade. Bliðheort wunode
 eorl unforcuð, elnes gemyndig,
 prist ond protheard in breanedum
 wintercealdan niht (1253-65a).

Just as Andreas is bound in prison, so is the entire land bound by frost and snow, and the Apostle's "blithe-heartedness" metaphorically indicates his superiority to the adversities of this life. Heat and cold have a clear emotional significance--the warmth of the mead-hall and of the friendship and mutual loyalty it contains, in contrast to the coldness of the lonely exile who has been barred from such pleasures--but Thomas Hill, referring especially to Gregory and Augustine, points out that such imagery has a moral significance as well.¹³² In this tradition, the heat of charity is opposed to the cold of cupidity, and for Gregory, conversion is expressed as the ice of wickedness being melted.¹³³ The

¹³² Thomas D. Hill, "The Tropological Context of Heat and Cold Imagery in Anglo-Saxon Poetry," NM, 69 (1968), 522-32.

¹³³ PL, 76, 431; quoted in Hill, pp. 524-5, as is the following passage from Solomon and Saturn, p. 528.

clearest example of this polarity in Old English is Solomon and Saturn, 353-8.

Saturnus cwæð:
 "Forwhon ne moton we ðonne ealle mid onmedlan
 gegnum gangan in godes rice?"
 Salomon cwæð:
 "Ne mæg fyres feng ne forstes cile,
 snaw ne sunne somod eardian,
 aldor geæfnan, ac hira sceal anra gehwylc
 onlutan ond onliðigan ðe hafað læsse mægn."

In Andreas then, the earth's being bound with cold during the Apostle's imprisonment metaphorically indicates the temporary control that the wicked inhabitants of the earthly city have over men in this world, but Andreas's final victory signifies the destruction of their power. After the conversion of the Mermedonians, the once frozen city is described as a "beorhtan byrig" (1649a), typologically looking to the kingdom of heaven, whither Andreas is said to lead the people through his teaching (1680-86). When he finally leaves them, they are described as "hat æt heortan" (1709), and this seems to be a conscious inversion of the poet's earlier description of them as the "cold-hearted ones."

Cirmdon caldheorte, (corðor oðrum getang),
 reðe ræsboran. Rihtes ne gimdon,
 meotudes mildse (138-40a).

Here coldness of heart is directly associated with not knowing the right or the mercy of God. So in The Seafarer, for instance, does the coldness of the weather indicate the separation from God which characterizes this world, and Hill notes the significance of the Seafarer's statement that the joys of the Lord are "hatran" to him than this dead life (64b-6a).¹³⁴

¹³⁴ Hill, "Tropological Context," p. 531. He also cites

The highest expression of the theme of exile, or as Kathryn Hume would put it, the greatest "anti-hall," is hell, the "deaðsele deofles" (Christ III, 1536a). Here the souls of the wicked will be consumed "mid þy egsan forste" (Christ III, 1546b), and this is a natural extension of the cold and wintry weather which binds men like the Wanderer and the Seafarer on the sea of this world. The poet of Solomon and Saturn refers to hell as a "wæl-cealde wic wintre beðeahte" (469), and it is there that the devil and his rebellious angels lie bound (cf. Solomon and Saturn, 451-60). Satan says of it,

Ic eom rices leas;
habbað me swa hearde helle cloomas
fæste befangen. Her is fyr micel,
ufan and neaðone. Ic a ne geseah
laðran landscope (Genesis B, 372b-6a),

and it is a "hated country," just as the ideal homeland, which Satan lacks, is "oferleof æghwylcum men" (Rune Poem, 71). He says as well that hell is a

windiga sele
eall innweard atole gefylled.
Ne mot ic hihtlicran hames brucan,
burga ne belda, ne on þa beorhtan gescaft
ne mot ic æfre ma eagum starian
(Christ and Satan, 135b-9).

The "windiness" of the place is related to the adverse winds and climatic conditions which beset men in this world, and earthly exile is only a mundane reflection of the permanent exile of hell. Whoever goes to hell "næfre ræste nafap,"¹³⁵ and this is in opposition to the secur-

other examples from Old English, although it is unnecessary to discuss them here.

¹³⁵ Blickling Homilies, p. 41.

ity and fixedness which characterize the typical homeland. This, once again, is part of the ongoing contrast in Old English between the fastness of the true homeland, the highest expression of which is heaven, and the illusory fastness of the earthly city. The Wanderer must "bind fast" his thoughts in this life (Wanderer, 13, 18), and the expression "fæste" here looks to the final "fæstnung" of heaven, toward which the Wanderer turns at the end of the poem (114b-15).¹³⁶ Similarly, the first city, built by Cain, is described as a "weallfæstenna" (Genesis A, 1058b), but this only represents the false security of the earthly city. One expression of this theme appears in Elene. Describing Constantine's defeat of the heathen, Cynewulf says,

Wurdon heardingas
wide towrecene. Sume wig fornam.
Sume unsofte aldor generedon
on þam heresiðe. Sume healfcwice
flugon on fæsten ond feore burgon
æfter stanclifum, stede weardedon
ymb Danubie. Sume drenc fornam
on lagostreame lifesæt ende (130b-37).

Some, "half-alive," flee "on fæsten" among the stone-cliffs, but their safety is only illusory, and we have noted repeatedly the association of cliffs and headlands with hell. This is reinforced by the statement following that some were drowned in the river, and drowning, as with Eleusius and his myrmidons, is once again emblematic of going to hell.¹³⁷ Thus, even though some of the

¹³⁶ This theme of fastness in The Wanderer has already been quite adequately discussed; see above, p. 72n.

¹³⁷ See above, pp. 115-18.

Huns are able to escape the weapons of Constantine, their damnation is still certain. What they see as security among the stone-cliffs is only the temporary security of this life, and they will have no share in the eternal felicity of those, like Constantine and his mother, who venerate the true cross.

The ontological difference, if you will, between earthly exile and the permanent exile of hell brings us to an important point, wherein we must distinguish between types of exile. The cowardly warrior, Adam, or Guthlac's fiends, are exiles who have been cast out against their wills, as the result of improper behavior. Guthlac, however, is a voluntary exile from the fellowship of men, and he has merely forsaken the earthly city for membership in the heavenly. He does not live on the barrow as the result of improper behavior, but rather, because he is concerned with acting rightly. Heeding the Apostle James's admonition--

nescitis quia amicitia huius mundi inimica
est Dei? Quicumque ergo voluerit amicus
esse saeculi huius, inimicus Dei consti-
tuitur (James 4:4)--

Guthlac gives up worldly friendship, even with his own sister, in looking to something beyond. The peregrinus pro amore Dei, who went into foreign lands to preach the gospel in hope of heavenly reward, was a common figure in the Irish Church, and the tradition carried over into Old English poetry. Andreas and Elene are peregrini of this sort when they go on their respective missions--they are isolated wanderers, but at the same time, they are ser-

vants of God. Andreas is an exile, but the voice of God still says to him,

Ne wep þone wræcsið, wine leofesta,
 nis þe to frecne. Ic þe friðe healde,
 minre mundbyrde mægene besette (Andreas, 1431-3),

and God's protection is indicated earlier by the cloud with which Andreas and his companions are surrounded upon first coming to Mermedonia (1044-8). The Israelites in the Old English Exodus are such exiles as well, representing the civitas Dei sojourning in this world, and the cloud which guides them (71-80) is analogous to the cloud in Andreas. They are protected by God, even though they are "eðelleasum" (139a). In Genesis A, Abraham is a voluntary exile among "ellþeodigne" (2698-2703; cf. 1844-7, 2834-7), and he is a type of the Christian Apostles to come, of whom Paul says,

Usque in hanc horam et esurimus, et siti-
 mus, et nudi sumus, et colaphis caedimur,
 et instabiles sumus (1 Cor. 4:11).

A lordless man who, like the Apostles, would hunger and thirst and have no certain dwelling-place, need not fear, however, if he worships God.

næfre hleowlora
 æt edwihtan æfre weorðeð
 feorhberendra forht and acol,
 mon for metode, þe him æfter a
 þurh gemynda sped mode and dædum,
 worde and gewitte, wise þance,
 oð his ealdorgedal oleccan wile
 (Genesis A, 1953-9).

The joys of earth are transitory, granted to exiles (Exodus, 532b-34a), and this is the realization at which both the Wanderer and the Seafarer finally arrive. They, like the Israelites of the Exodus, are exiles on earth, look-

ing to heaven, and one can see them as well as metaphorical peregrini.¹³⁸

Cain and Satan are the archetypes for all "behavioral" exiles, and both are cast out as the result of sin. It is interesting to note, in the passage from St. Augustine quoted above (pp. 258-59) concerning Cain's founding of the earthly city, that Abel is referred to as a peregrinus and that this is given as the reason for his not having founded a city as well. The Christian exile's true home is in heaven, so he does not regret isolation on earth, but the Germanic or non-Christian exile finds his definition on earth, so separation from an earthly homeland constitutes unspeakable woe. Grendel, who as a monster is of the race of Cain (Beowulf, 104-14), must necessarily be a member of the earthly city, and thus it is that the joys of Heorot cause him such pain. Grendel's irritation in Beowulf is similar to that of Satan in Genesis B.

þæt me is sorga mæst,
þæt Adam sceal, þe wæs of eorðan geworht,
minne stronglican stol behealdan,
wesan him on wynne, and we þis wite polien,
hearm on þisse helle (364b-8a).

Cain, Satan, and Grendel are absolutes of evil, and the relationship between them is clear.

The physical and mental unrest of the exile-state is in exact opposition, once again, to the nature of the heavenly homeland, the essence of which is perpetual peace, and just as the earthly homeland is a type of heav-

¹³⁸ See above, p. 69n.

en, so is earthly exile the type of hell. The Seafarer's existence is characterized by the lack of the joys of the comitatus in the same way as the state of the wicked in hell is characterized by eternal separation from the sight of God. The perpetual motion of the exile is paralleled by the unending wanderings of the fiends of hell, whose torments, like the Seafarer's, are both physical and mental. The Seafarer is able to transcend his exile and isolation by giving up his false earthly values and turning his mind toward heaven, but hell is the mere extension into infinity of the false values of life, and for those assigned to its regions, there is no escape. Hell is cosmic chaos and can be seen as Holofernes' feast or Mermedonian barbarianism on a grander scale.

For the Anglo-Saxon poet, the typology is complete, and on earth is set up in form the cosmic duality which governs us after death. The physical phenomena of this life only look to a higher reality, and what is expressed on one level by the proliferation of earthly vegetation is expressed on another in the theme of the homeland. Both gain their significance from that which is to come, and the history of man is a progressive regeneration, beginning in sea-like chaos and ending in the fixity of heaven. What goes between is both a reflection of the cosmogony and a prefiguration of God's New Creation, and we can only imitate the motives and action of God in the former, while we hope for the latter.

Chapter Five

Conclusion

However it may be expressed for the comprehension of men, the only reality is God. The waters of baptism are of no use without the cross of Christ, but the cross itself would be meaningless were it not for the Incarnation. So also, the earthly homeland gains its significance from looking towards heaven, but heaven is only "real" because it is the dwelling-place of God. Thus do all symbols derive their meaning, and whether we call this symbol-forming energy "God"--following the Anglo-Saxon Churchmen--or "libido"--following Jung--is, at least from a modern perspective, of little consequence. In either case, it is an indefinable quantity, and this very indefinability results in a corresponding hermeneutic "uncertainty" which precludes the possibility of accepting any unitary and allegorical system of interpretation such as that which assumes, for instance, that all medieval poems must, by definition, deal with charity. Such theories of strictly "conscious" composition fail to account for the polyvalence of symbol meanings and for the universal extensiveness--what Eliade calls the "modality"--of metaphoric structures and fail to recognize how close the analogy between God's creation of the earth and the poet's creation of an artistic cosmology really is. Individual Anglo-Saxon poems must be seen as parts of an overall pattern of images, which, for our present

purposes, we have broken down into those relating to the sea, those relating to the eschatology of the cross, and those relating to the theme of the homeland. The metaphorical progression is one from chaos to fixity, from darkness to light, but each of these groups of images nonetheless contains within itself the essential duality which characterizes not only all symbolic structures, but all life. The sea represents chaos but also baptism; the cross is an instrument of torture but also the sign of universal salvation; and heaven is a homeland but so is hell. The general Christian dichotomy between chaos and fixity, potential and fulfillment, hell and heaven, is mediated in the Incarnation, but the Incarnation itself only expresses the paradox of God on earth, of divinity in human form.

Our purpose in this thesis has been to examine the validity of combining literary and non-literary approaches in the interpretation of Old English poetry, and having found workable results, which take into account both the literal sense of the text and a wider psychological necessity, we are justified in putting this forth as a viable method of hermeneutics. This is not simply, however, to claim victory and retreat, and one must keep in mind the charge of circularity which R.S. Crane, for one, has brought against the Robertsonians.¹ Crane questions,

¹ R.S. Crane, "On Hypotheses in 'Historical Criticism': Apropos of Certain Contemporary Medievalists," in The Idea of the Humanities and Other Essays Critical and Historical, vol. 2 (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1967), 236-60.

on the most basic level, the historical critics' understanding and use of hypotheses and points out that such critics assume, a priori, that charity is the one unitary message of all medieval poetry, and then, discarding the literal meaning as irrelevant, they proceed to find their one predetermined meaning and conclude that, having found it, their initial hypothesis must have been correct. For Crane, the purpose of criticism is to establish facts about literature, and the failure of the Robertsonians is in neglecting to distinguish between fact and hypothesis. That charity is the informing principle behind all medieval literature is merely a hypothesis, but its truth comes to be assumed, and Crane is "skeptical of any conclusion that presupposes the truth of the hypothesis which has led to its discovery."² The difference in the present case is that the cross-cultural value of symbol-meanings, however they may be explained, is no hypothesis, but a well-established and indisputable fact, and it is further clear that the best expression of this cross-cultural "truth"--by which we mean to indicate social or psychological validity--in Anglo-Saxon England is in the imagery adopted from the Bible and the Fathers and tempered by the language and forms of the Anglo-Saxons' Germanic heritage. This is not an exclusionary position like that of the Robertsonians but allows for the fact of interpretative "uncertainty." On the other hand, it is not in practice so broad as to become meaningless and

² Ibid., p. 243.

place our arguments in a symbolic never-never land where "anything can mean anything." Our analysis has proceeded, unlike that of the historical critics, with both feet firmly planted on the ground, and we have proposed no allegorical interpretations which are not tied to the literal sense of the text. Crane, indeed, makes the same mistake as the Robertsonians in assuming that the critic's main task is to discover those meanings which were intended by the historically and culturally conditioned author.³ Authorial "intentions," however, are only half the story, and this approach ignores the unconscious, "non-apprehensible" side of artistic creation and fails to see that God, not the poet, is the one who gives symbols their meanings.

We have come a step forward in recognizing this fact, but the job of applying such knowledge to the poetry of Anglo-Saxon England, or to any medieval poetry, is far from complete. In the present instance, we have isolated only certain metaphoric structures for consideration, and although these embrace various and contrasting aspects of Christian cosmology, which runs from sea-like chaos and isolation to the pure contemplation of God in eschatological glory, it would be useful to examine how these principles could be applied to other themes--either to broad, recurring motifs such as light and darkness or height and depth, or to much more specific, individual images such as cups or swords or laughter. In any case,

³ Ibid., pp. 246-7.

the furthering of such analyses can only increase our knowledge of medieval poetry.

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